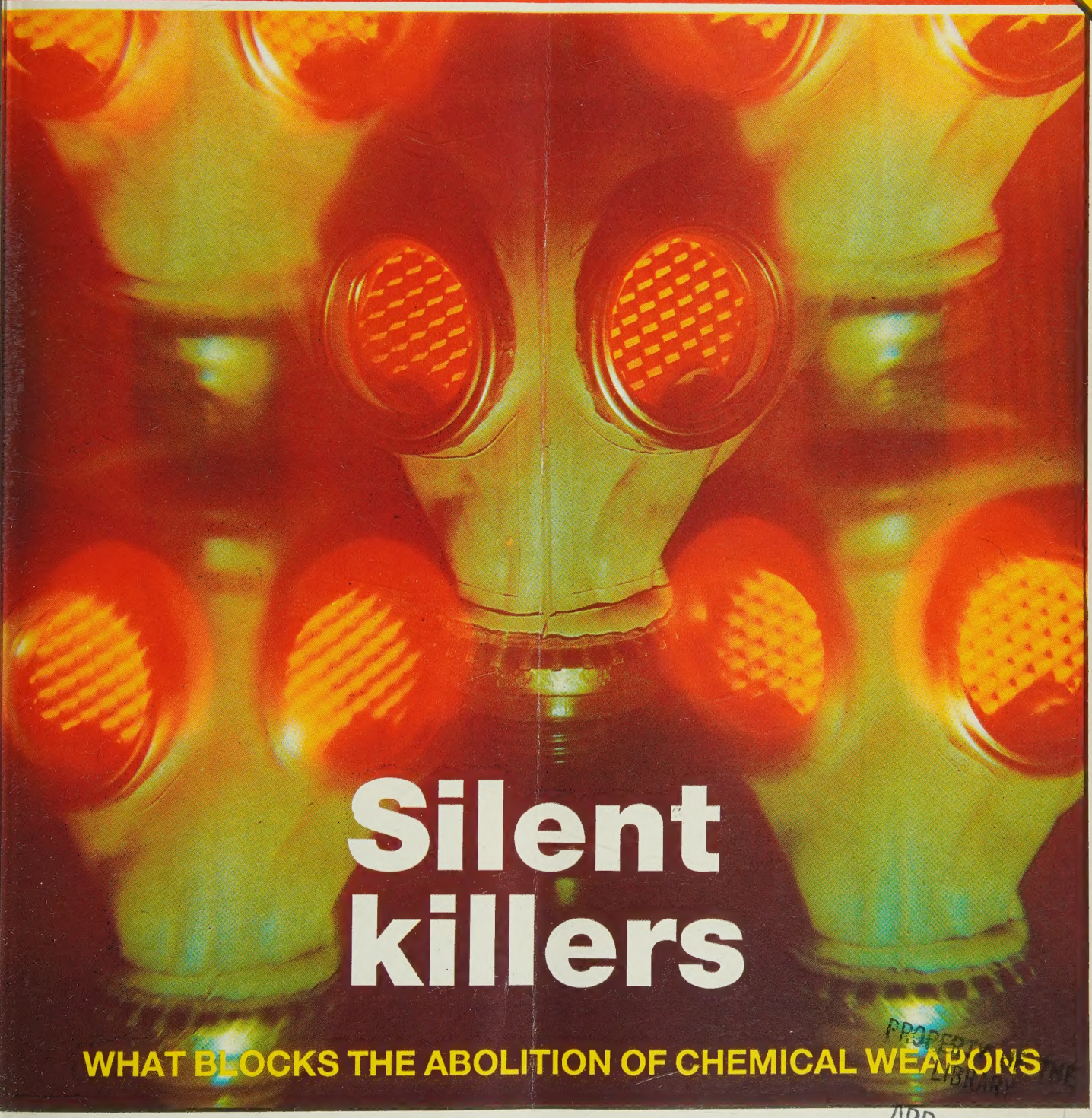
14
APRIL 1988

NEW TIMES

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

Underground resistance in Chile



Silent killers

WHAT BLOCKS THE ABOLITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Fyodor Burlatsky:

NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

APR 14 1988
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Drawing by Sergei Ainutdinov

NEW TIMES

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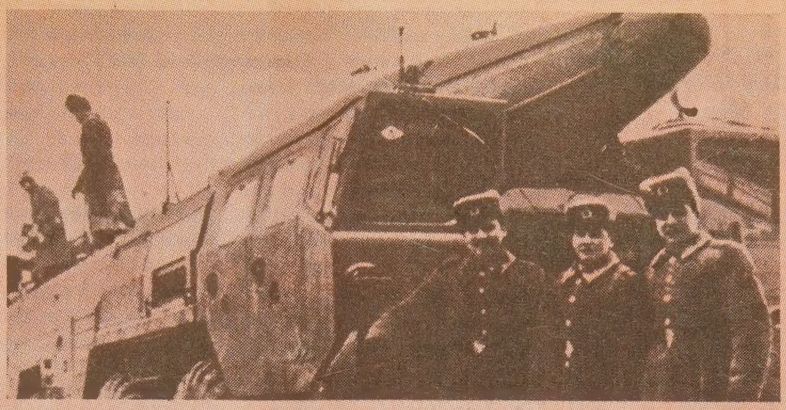

As a token of good will and an instance of new political thinking in action, Soviet operational-tactical missiles are being pulled out of Czechoslovakia and the G.D.R. although the INF treaty is yet to be ratified.

Problems of peace and security, disarmament and new political thinking are discussed in this issue by Vladimir Petrovsky, Sam Nunn and Rair Simonyan (pp. 5,13,14).

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Cover by
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OPINIONS

It is often said that perestroika is essentially a revolutionary reform of society. So it is, and I believe it will be a long and difficult process. Nevertheless, we believe that perestroika will succeed. But success will come only if we avoid past mistakes. For this purpose we should study the history of our country well.

For one or other reason of a subjective character, whole periods in the history of our country have been passed over in silence. Today schoolchildren have a good knowledge of, say, the life of the Egyptian pharaohs, but know practically nothing about the Khrushchev period, when the first attempt to carry out economic and political reforms was made.

Perestroika did not succeed at the time. Without knowing the reasons for that failure, we are unlikely to be able to cope with the truly immense tasks that now face us.

IOSIF MUDRAKOV
Taldy-Kurgan region, U.S.S.R.

●

I welcome the idea of instituting a Day of Remembrance. I would even call it a Day of Grateful or reverent Remembrance. On that day we shall remember with gratitude the soldiers who were killed in the battles for freedom and the homeland, those who died of their wounds after the war, and those who did not fight but ploughed the land and sowed wheat, multiplying our victories and the wealth and prosperity of our homeland. It is on the Day of Remembrance that we should feel part of the common tree of life.

A. GRINYUK
Tula, U.S.S.R.

●

Recently I saw an American film about soldiers taken prisoner and thrown into a nazi concentration camp during the second world war. Among the POWs there was a group of Soviet soldiers. I was strongly impressed by the scene where several of them threw themselves onto barbed wire and sacrificed their lives to help those trying to escape from the camp.

Frankly, I was amazed to see for the first time a film in which the Russians are not shown as "baddies." It indicates, in my opinion, that sound tendencies may be prevailing in American society.

FRANCISCO MORANT GONZALES
Alicante, Spain

READERS' QUESTIONS

My heart filled with joy when I watched the signing of the American-Soviet INF treaty on TV. At last, I thought, the leaders of our countries have started a great and really serious job - to rid the world of weapons. I hope Reagan and Gorbachev have enough common sense to take further steps in this direction.

I want, therefore, to ask you when, in your opinion, a treaty on a 50-per cent reduction of strategic offensive weapons will be concluded. And will it be concluded at all?

JEFFREY ROBERTSON
Minneapolis, U.S.A.

●

It has become widely known in the West that the Soviet Union is going to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan. To my mind, this is a wise decision. But I am apprehensive that the pullout of Soviet troops may be delayed indefinitely under pretexts of various kinds.

ROGER FONTAINE
Paris, France

●

Together with a group of my compatriots, I was in Moscow recently. We went to the Red Square and visited museums and theatres. I still have most pleasant recollections of them. However, many of us were shocked by what they saw in your shops. It seems to me that your light industry is producing too many low-quality goods. Nevertheless, those who make them are evidently paid wages. In my country they would have been ruined long ago.

Will perestroika bring about a change in this respect? I understand that Soviet people want to buy high-quality goods.

MARIA SEGNI
Padua, Italy

●

I support your perestroika from the bottom of my heart. Nevertheless, I think you should criticize your past much less than you do now. Why to give the rightists food for speculation?

NIKOLAI DAB
Larisa, Greece

GLASNOST

FROM OUR MAILBAG

FOR MORE DEMOCRACY

I think the Soviet Union has made a mistake in applying for aid to the West with a view to attaining high technological standards, and in starting to buy foreign equipment and technology. This has doomed the country to the purchase of obsolete plant, as the imperialists are not in the least interested in furthering the progress of the Soviet Union.

Only reliance on its own efforts in science and industry can, in my opinion, help your state overcome the lag in some fields and achieve a qualitatively new level in the economy, including the output of consumer goods.

That reliance on one's own efforts is the only correct way is demonstrated by the Soviet Union's successes in space exploration. When you act on your own, without counting on foreign assistance, you always get impressive results, even considerably excelling other countries.

MAURO ALESSANDRINI
Rimini, Italy

●

I am worried about the obstacles that have arisen at the present stage of perestroika. No problem of the country's development, I think, can today be tackled without regard for this disturbing fact. The years of stagnation have, of course, undermined confidence in our slogans.

True, trust can be restored. But for this purpose it is necessary to give honest answers to painful questions. The lack of information and the hushing up of mistakes often lead us to an impasse.

Many officials, especially in the provinces, still regard criticism as a malicious attack on Soviet life. But I am sure that only a critical analysis of the past and the present can ensure progress. Guarantees should be provided in the near future against the possibility of any creative initiative being quietly strangled by bureaucrats.

EVGENI MIKOV
Khabarovsk, U.S.S.R.

GLASNOST

FROM OUR MAILBAG

EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT

I came by chance across the New Times issue (No. 1/88) carrying Leonid Ionin's article "A postcard from Bielefeld." The author's stand on the question of people-to-people diplomacy produced a deep impression on me. It was interesting to read of Leonid Ionin's meeting with Heinz Hagemann, who later became his friend.

Austrian by birth, I was called up, against my will, to serve in the Wehrmacht. My ordeal coninued for six years, with the last eighteen months spent as a prisoner of war in France, where I came to know disgrace and humiliation for being one of the "superior race" to which I had never belonged.

After the war I emigrated to the United States in order to forget everything. Since then I've tried to imbibe the culture of a people regarded by the nazi "superior creatures" as a second-rate nation. For many years I taught French and Spanish language and literature at colleges, first in France and then in Canada and the United States.

During the war I learned to discern the essence of people, regardless of their nationality, and to appreciate the human in them. Hagemann's argument that he merely carried out orders holds no water, in my opinion. It only shows that, despite the war, he has not matured politically.

PAUL KOHLER
Delhi, India

FRANK LETTERS

The Soviet Union has a quarter of the world's scientists and a vast economic potential. Nevertheless, its electronics is not highly thought of. Your mini-buses and cars have not been upgraded for years. This compels people to give preference to Toyotas or Fords.

Inertia and reluctance to produce goods badly needed by the country are to blame for this, in my view. I hope that perestroika will solve these problems. The time has come for you, too, to manufacture goods that can compete on world markets. Only then can the Soviet Union, together with other socialist countries, gain economic superiority over the capitalist states.

LEONARDO MONTEJO RODRIGUEZ
Villa Clara, Cuba

According to Soviet statistics, much more electricity is consumed in your country than is actually needed, especially in the economy. It has been noted in the press, for instance, that several times more electricity is consumed in the Soviet Union per each unit of output, as compared with industrial capitalist countries.

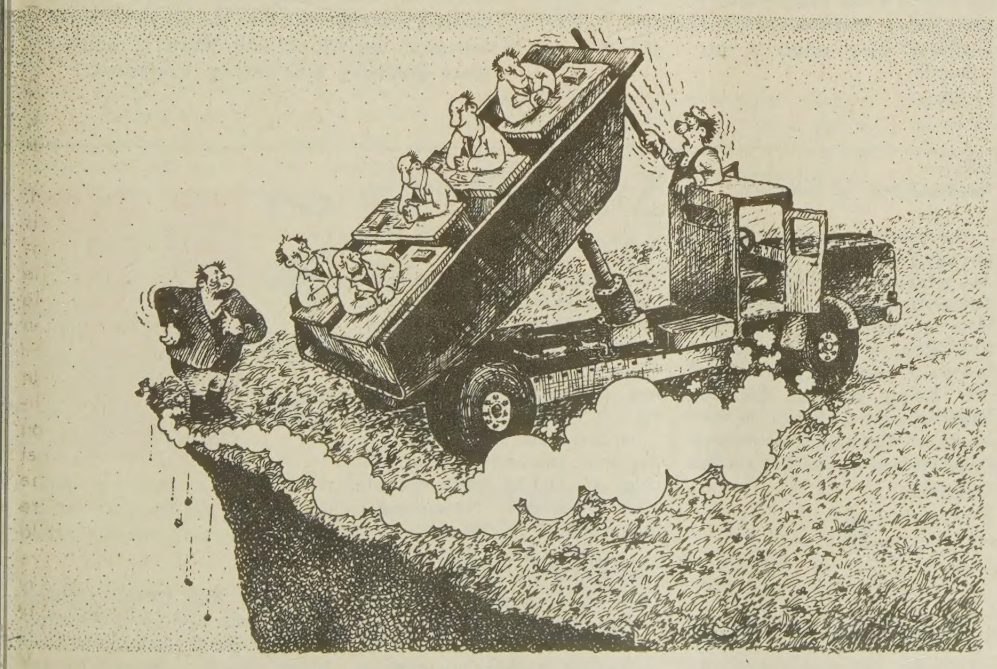
I have no great confidence in the Italian press. As a rule, it tends to exaggerate, especially where the socialist countries are concerned. In the conditions of perestroika now under way in the Soviet Union, the output of high-quality goods with the lowest possible power consumption directly depends, in my opinion, on energy saving, and is the best performance indicator of enterprises running on a profit-and-loss basis.

Italy is low on energy resources and depends in this respect on many countries, including the Soviet Union. I'm sure that in the course of perestroika all, even minor, squanderings of these valuable resources will be eliminated in the Soviet Union.

ENRICO ZANNI
Sassuolo, Italy

●

AN ARTIST'S COMMENT



Drawing by Sergei Ainutdinov

I have always wondered at the ingenuity of bureaucrats, and therefore want to tell New Times readers what procedure for contacts with foreign guests has been introduced at the Molodezhny hotel complex in Moscow.

I tried to get in touch with my colleague, Prof. Terry Emmons of Stanford University, California, who was in Moscow in transit with a group of his students. But I.M. Shalito, the hotel administrator "in charge of work with foreigners" (there is such a post, it turns out), refused to give me Prof. Emmons' telephone number, referring to an appropriate instruction, and suggested that I come to the hotel myself and hand in an application with my request. A very strange contribution by the hotel administration to the international cooperation of scientists!

NATHAN EIDELMAN
Cand. Sc. (Hist.)
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK

PRIVATE OPINION

JAYANTHA DHANAPALA, director, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

It was no accident that UNIDIR-sponsored second international conference on a disarmament research programme for the 1990s was held at the end of March. We thought it the right moment to hold such a forum: many new facts have been made available thanks to the latest events in the disarmament field.

We wanted first of all to review the state of disarmament research, consider the prospects of our work for the years to come, and jointly discuss how we could contribute to the success of the U.N. disarmament session to open in New York in two months' time.

I should like to express our gratitude to the Soviet government for the opportunity to hold the conference in the Black Sea resort town of Sochi, and thank our colleages from the Institute of World Economics and International Relations, The conference was attended by directors and staff researchers of institutes studying problems of international security and disarmament from more than 50 countries in different regions of the world. It offered us a good opportunity to establish contacts and cooperation, exchange views, and identify the most urgent issues we will have to deal with in the 1990s.

The conference has strengthened ties and cooperation between the institutes concerned and raised them to a higher level. UNIDIR is trying to fulfil the role of a link and centre in the establishment of such contacts, and the conference has proved very useful in this respect.

LEV RAZGON, writer and veteran member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

The CC CPSU Political Bureau's commission of enquiry into the repressions in the 1930-40s and early 1950s has released a statement of great importance to people concerned with the history of our country. At its latest meeting, it heard a report from the Party Control Committee on the reinstatement in the Party of a large group of prominent Party leaders, statesmen and outstanding military commanders.

It is impossible to bring the dead back to life. But it is possible to restore to our minds the names of people who remained immortal in history and become models of statesmanship, valour and military skill. This means a great deal to my generation. The 80 years I have lived cover virtually the whole period of Soviet history.

We closely followed the activity of Mikhail Tukhachevsky, Iona Yakir, Vitaly Primakov, Ieronim Uborevich and other military leaders. For us they were more than the living heroes of books, poems and reminiscences. We believed that they would lead us to battle in a future, and as we believed, inevitable war against imperialism and fascism.

We witnessed what happened in the terrible years of the Stalin repressions with despair, regardless of whether or not we believed that the people who represented the flower of the Party, the small cohort of veteran Bolsheviks so highly valued by Lenin, were guilty of high treason. When whole armies were defeated and part of our territory was captured by the enemy, we thought bitterly that this would not have happened if our armies had been commanded by real military leaders.

The heroes of our youth, the heroes of our history are now being rehabilitated. There is nothing more terrible than the sense of justice trampled underfoot, and there is nothing more gratifying than seeing it restored.

NEWS

Hungary's Trade Delegation in the Soviet Union has thanked New Times for "its contribution to the promotion of fruitful cooperation in foreign trade between Hungary and the Soviet Union," its head, Imre Mataiz, said at a press conference for Soviet journalists held in the Trade Delegation office in Moscow on March 22.

Imre Mataiz spoke about the expansion of trade and economic ties between our countries last year, and about the agreements concluded for 1988.

Hungary is the fifth largest trade partner of the Soviet Union. For its part, the Soviet Union is the biggest foreign trade partner of Hungary.

The readers of our magazine already know about joint ventures, a qualitatively new form of Soviet-Hungarian cooperation. Nine enterprises of this kind had been set up by the end of last year, and the possibilities are being studied for the establishment of ten more joint ventures. The magazine intends to publish more articles on this subject.

●

Ferenc Varnai, deputy editor-in-chief of the weekly Magyarorszag, our old friend and colleague and a prominent Hungarian publicist, spent five days in Moscow from March 21 to 25 as a guest of New Times.

He was interested in a wide range of questions concerning perestroika in our country, democratization and glasnost, in particlar, the reform of high and secondary school. The various aspects of the reform were discussed in the talk with Vladimir Matveyev, editor-in-chief of Uchitelskaya Gazeta (The Teacher's Newspaper), and members of its staff.

Our guest also had thorough talks with Academician Leonid Abalkin, director of the Institute of Economics of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, Mikhail Mchedlov, deputy director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the CPSU Central Committee, and Karen Khachaturov, deputy chairman of the board of the Novosti Press Agency.

A new concept of world politics

VLADIMIR PETROVSKY

The concept of an all-embracing system of international security, put forward by the 27th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party two years ago, has evoked a widespread and lively discussion. New political vistas are now at the focus of the world's attention, and the problems of interstate relations and interdependency have appeared in a new light. Figuratively speaking, a vast field of ideas and activity has been opened up, and the reshaping of our perception of world affairs has started.

Basic new elements in the concept

The new concept recognizes that the world is complex and contradictory but, most importantly, integral and indivisible. This basic idea is a departure from the old and erroneous view, which saw the opposition of one socio-economic system to the other outside the context of an interdependent and interconnected world.

Another, no less important, idea of the new concept is that universal peace is the supreme human objective. Although peace is not the only thing humanity needs, the existence of humanity without peace is impossible. The preservation of peace and the survival of mankind is therefore the top-priority task of policy.

The concept of peaceful coexistence is acquiring new meaning. Today peaceful coexistence is not simply the most desirable and rational but also the only possible state of international relations. Interpreted in a new way, the concept of peaceful coexistence helps us gain a new understanding of security and the guarantees of security.

The political and sociological understanding of the notion of security brings new content to the related notion of peace. In the opinion of political scientists, peace can mean simply the absence of war. However, it can also be secure, meaning the absence of war or any threat of the use of force, the existence of appropriate international guarantees to maintain such a condition, and the expansion of broad ties between states and individual citizens.

It is not only political scientists who talk today of secure peace as a qualitatively new condition. The famous Russian scholar Vladimir Vernadsky wrote that genuine peace among nations is not so much the absence of wars as the elimination of any possibility of war. It means a situation in which war will objectively be ruled out and disputes between states will be settled by peaceful means alone, based on reason and not on armed force.

Soviet diplomacy has always aimed at a reliable security system - both in the 1930s and during the second world war, when the Soviet Union came out with the initiative to establish an international security organization. Later, this position found expression in the basic goal of the United Nations - preserving international peace and security.

Today the task of ensuring security should be viewed differently, as a global issue relating not only to the military-political sphere, but to all other areas of international affairs.

True, simultaneously with cooperation, the struggle in the field of international relations continues. But the dialectics of the struggle and cooperation seems different. The emphasis is being placed on cooperation, while the struggle is assuming the form of peaceful competition.

The force of argument, not the argument of force

● A comprehensive system of international security embraces all states and public movements and all tendencies in world politics. Some claim that each component of this system is autonomous. Changes in each component are a purely domestic affair, as ties between the components have a formal and unstable character.

I do not believe this to be so. In an all-embracing system of international security, changes in each component will in one way or another influence the system as a whole. It is in this relationship that the character of the present-day interdependent and interconnected world is expressed, while new thinking is expressed in the awareness of this fact.

An all-embracing system of international security serves preventive purposes, and it can only reveal its full value in a world free of nuclear weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction. It presupposes a comprehensive approach to international relations.

In the past, we put the emphasis on disarmament, making the solution of other problems dependent on progress in that field. As for the West, it placed the emphasis on human rights and reduced the notion of security to the settlement of conflicts and crises. The developing nations saw the future of international relations in the establishment of a new world economic order.

If adopted, the concept of a comprehensive security system would free international conferences and negotiations of sterile disputes as to which global problem should be tackled first. Disputes of this kind often reminded one of the heated argument between Swift's characters on how to break eggs: from the flat or the pointed end.

In addition to the nuclear threat, there are other global problems in our interdependent world, such as ecospasm, hunger and poverty. Efforts should therefore be made simultaneously in all directions so that outstanding issues do not accumulate.

At the same time, the importance of disarmament as the principal trend in international relations is becoming increasingly clear. In the context of all global

VLADIMIR PETROVSKY, D.Sc., U.S.S.R. Deputy Foreign Minister, has written extensively on security and disarmament.

Eduard Shevardnadze and George Shultz meet in Washington in another attempt to thrash out an accord and compromises. Photo from International Herald Tribune (U.S.A.)

problems, disarmament appears to be imperative in preserving the world as it is today and consequently is an integral part of it. Only disarmament can create reliable material guarantees of a secure, non-nuclear and, finally, demilitarized world.

● The concept of a comprehensive security presupposes that security should be achieved by political means only, without resort to arms.

In the past, political decisions on security were seen as an alternative to military means, at best as a preferable alternative. Today it is impossible to regard the problem in this way.

The recognition of political means as the only possible way of ensuring security in this nuclear age has made law the main instrument in the solution of international problems. But to this end one has to abandon the notion of the auxiliary role of law with regard to policy.

The Delhi declaration has added a moral dimension to the concept of security. It makes us recall Mahatma Gandhi's and Leo Tolstoy's fervent preaching of non-violence and the need for the moral perfection of man, and Fyodor Dostoyevsky's concept of morals as a standard by which to judge the degree to which the end and the means are compatible. The declaration goes further, however, It proposes concrete actions.

● The concept of a comprehensive security system presupposes the solution of international problems by the efforts of all and everyone, both states and public forces and movements.In other words it offers a way of democratizing and humanizing international relations.

A non-nuclear world, without privileges for members of the nuclear club, makes international relations more equitable. Together with bilateral ones, multilateral relations will play an equally important part in such a world, and the role of the United Nations as a forum of states, and world public opinion is therefore expected to increase.

● The ensuring of security by political means calls for new methods of settling international problems. Today relations between states tend to be built not on a balance of strength but on a balance of interests, that is, with regard for one's own interests and respect for the interests of other members of the world community.

The concept of balanced interests must be accepted by all states in the present-day world. The need to search, in certain circumstances, for "coinciding interests" in countries with different social systems was emphasized by Lenin. He warned against taking a stereotyped, mechanically equated and identical approach to the interests of states, and stressed that "as long as national and state distinctions exist among peoples and countries - and these will continue to exist for a very long time to come," we should not seek to eliminate this variety or suppress national distinctions, but take "national and national-state distinctions" into account.

National-state interests is a complex notion. It has military, political, economic, ecological and humanitarian aspects. Apart from national-state interests, there are the interests of groups of states, blocs and so on.

It is not easy to find a common denominator that takes into account the national interests of each state, and balance these interests and the interests of groups of states. But a criterion to help find such a denominator exists. There are also interests based on values common to all mankind. The most important of these is peace, the preservation of life on earth. The acceptance and profound understanding of this truth help to find the right direction.

It takes great statecraft to prevent a clash between the interests of individual states and groups of states, and their predominance over the interests of mankind and, guided exclusively by the interests of humanity, to find a reasonable and mutually acceptable, fair and concrete balance.

The search for such a balance requires a cautious attitude to each country and each group of states, and critical self-appraisal by each government, nation and state. States must adopt a mutually responsible attitude, regardless of their likes or dislikes, and learn to see each other as partners, not enemies.

Real and sham concessions

The search for a balance of interests requires a revival of diplomacy as the art of negotiation, as an instrument of reaching accord. A number of stereotypes will have to be discarded if we want to achieve this. It is often said that each step to meet one's partner halfway is a concession. This sounds like a charge against politicians, a hint that they are ideologically unstable or neglect national interests. But concessions are different, and it is impossible to reach a compromise or balance without them.

I repeat: there are different kinds of concession. A distinguished Soviet diplomat A. Kovalyov cites the following instance: at the beginning of talks one side puts forward ten demands deliberately unacceptable to the other side and quite unnecessary from the standpoint of its own interests. But in the course of talks three, five or all ten demands are withdrawn. It is, of course, a sham concession. There are, however, real concessions, and they must inevitably be made. Reasonable concessions allow the sides involved to balance their interests. It was on this basis that the Soviet Union and the United States concluded the INF treaty.

What is the link between new thinking and diplomacy?

● The new thinking imparts new qualities to diplomacy. First, diplomatic practrice is firmly grounded in scientific principles. Second, diplomatic activity based on accurate forecasts makes world politics more predictable: ideas about tendencies that shape world realities, and fundamental changes in them become clearer. Third, the new thinking encourages diplomatic activity. Today a Soviet diplomat is no longer a "postman of honour," as was alleged in the past. He has a big role to play in achieving Soviet foreign policy goals.

● The new thinking presupposes a new style in the conduct of world affairs and a new attitude to all members of the international community. For intercourse between them to become really construc-

tive and useful, the sides should exchange information, not biting remarks, hold frank dialogue, and try to convince, and not sting, each other.

The joint elaboration of foreign policy proposals and the implementation of these proposals are acquiring growing importance in relations between socialist countries. The Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty states, at its Berlin meeting in 1987, decided to form a group for the mutual exchange of current information, and a disarmament commission for the exchange of views and information on arms reduction and disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, including the discussion of initiatives advanced by allied states and the elaboration of joint proposals in this field.

● Moreover, the new thinking rules out any claim to a monopoly on truth. Truth cannot be introduced by decree. It can only be found by the joint efforts of all members of the international community. Today this means not simply cooperation but the creative effort of all countries in the building of a nuclear weapon-free world, a non-violent and democratic world.

● The new thinking presupposes open diplomatic activity. Political actions are addressed not only to governments but also to the general public, while the methods used eschew ruses of any kind. Public sentiments with regard to concrete political actions are carefully taken into account. It is important to remove the discrepancy between words and deeds, between propaganda and politics.

● Lastly, the new political thinking is manifested in the actions and behavior of states. For instance, the Soviet Union, advancing the concept of a comprehensive security system, has also demonstrated the will to put it into effect. Here are the major landmarks in the political implementation of this concept. The programme of security through disarmament, advanced on January 15, 1986, has become the core of an all-embracing system of international security, the principles of which were formulated at the 27th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. The regional - European, Asian-Pacific, North European and the Mediterranean - dimensions to a comprehensive security system were clearly delineated in Mikhail Gorbachev's address in Paris, in his Vladivostok speech, in his interview to the Indonesian newspaper Merdeka, in the Murmansk initiative, and in his Belgrade pronouncements. In his article, "Realities and Guarantees for a Secure World," published in September 1987, Mikhail Gorbachev outlined a programme of action to be taken in shaping a comprehensive security system right across the board, especially in enhancing the United Nations' role as chief regulator of this system.

It is hard to predict what concrete forms a comprehensive system of international security could assume. Only one thing is clear today: such a system will be possible to build only in a world free of weapons of mass destruction.

In advancing a comprehensive security system as an essential mode of life on our earth, we are open to the idea of a joint search for a future where universal security is a guarantee of the security of each individual.

What has been done and what is still to be done

The building of an all-embracing system of international security has started. The first stones are being laid. One of them is the Soviet-American treaty on the elimination of medium- and shorter-range missiles.

A dialogue has begun in the United Nations. The basic principles of an international security system were approved by the 42nd session of the General Assembly, where they were put forward as a blueprint for universal peace and security.

This was preceded by a heated debate. Some declared that the United Nations was not a forum for the approval of decisions of a Soviet Party Congress, while others alleged that the Soviet proposals contained nothing new and merely repeated the U.N. Charter.

Of course, the idea of a comprehensive security system is akin both to the U.N. Charter and the concept of collective security. But it is a qualitatively new concept which does not simply embrace the concept of collective security but has developed it in the nuclear-missile age. It is a new stage in the philosophy of world politics, giving top priority to the interests of all of mankind.

What distinguishes the concept of a comprehensive security system from the concept underlying the U.N. Charter?

First, the goals of ensuring collective security did not go beyond the bounds of existing or potential seats of armed conflict in different regions. But now the task fo safeguarding security on a worldwide scale, ruling out not only the use of force but also the threat to use it in any region, is on the agenda.

Second, the concept of collective security provided for the creation of a security system by one group of countries against other countries, which were viewed as potential aggressors. The present concept of security envisages the creation of a system not directed against any state.

Third, the concept of collective security regarded armed conflicts as inevitable, and stressed the prevention of aggression, whereas the new concept of security rejects any war, conventional or nuclear. While creating material and legal obstacles to the use of violence, it attaches exceptional importance to "preventive" diplomacy.

Some people assert that the concept of a comprehensive security system is an attempt to replace the relevant articles in the U.N. Charter. There can only be one reply to this: the purpose of the Soviet initiative is to ensure conditions in which the security mechanism envisaged in the U.N. documents will be able to operte.

Many Western observers admit that the U.N. Charter, having committed member states "to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in common interest," has formulated the principle of the centralized use of armed force, envisaging - merely as an exception to this rule - the inherent right of states to individual or collective self-defence.

In postwar years, however, the exception to this principle in the Charter has become the rule and the principle itself the exception. The right to collective self-defence was used to facilitate the establishment of two mutually opposed military and political alliances - NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization. With the aid of nuclear weapons, which are not even mentioned in the U.N. Charter, the alliance mechanism of deterrence has virtually paralyzed the methods envisaged in it.

It may therefore be concluded that only the dissolution of the blocs and the elimination of nuclear weapons will recreate the original conditions in which the security mechanism envisaged in the U.N. Charter can operate. The concept of a comprehensive security system does not merely rework, but enriches the U.N. Charter with the practice of international relations.

The Soviet Union proposes to enhance the importance of the United Nations and its main bodies in world affairs, heighten the role of legal principles in the U.N.'s activity (particularly by imparting a mandatory character to the rulings of the International Court of Justice), and set up an international mechanism to control the implementation of agreements on a reduction in world tensions and arms limitations, and monitor the military situation in areas of crisis. Measures of this kind could expedite the building of an all-embracing system of international security and thereby realize the idea of this system.

The building of a comprehensive security system is not a task for the United Nations alone. It is a matter of concern to each member of the world community, and a contribution to the establishment of such a system can both be made unilaterally and bilaterally.

But most important is the will to take practical action, and advance from the theoretical concept of security to real and concrete cooperation. ■

Variations on a theme

The election campaign in France is on its home stretch now. On April 24 the first round of the presidential elections will show which two candidates have won the largest number of votes. The second round on May 8 will name the fifth president of the Fifth Republic.

ANDREI KUDRYAVTSEV

The presidential race is taking place against a political background that was changed dramatically by the parliamentary elections of March 1986. The victory of the coalition of bourgeois parties, the Alliance for the Republic (RPR) and the Union for French Democracy (UDF), resulted in coexistence between a Socialist president, Francois Mitterrand, and a right-wing prime minister, RPR leader Jacques Chirac, an unprecedented situation in France. A new element was introduced to the situation by the emergence of a notable counterweight to the traditional bourgeois parties, as represented by the ultra-right National Front headed by le Pen. For the first time it has managed to form an independent parliamentary faction outside the ruling majority. The alliance of the two leading right-wing parties has by no means put an end to the rivalry between them. This rivalry was fuelled by the RPR's attempt to get into the driving seat in the coalition, and the UDF's attempts to preserve its political identity. Nor can one discount the clash of personalities between the potential presidential candidates within the right, notably, Jacques Chirac and former Prime Minister Raymond Barre.

Having lost its parliamentary majority, the French Socialist Party (PSF) nevertheless gained the largest number of seats in the National Assembly, and remained the biggest force on the left of the political spectrum. The Socialist leadership had completely abandoned the course on radical social reform that brought it to power in the 1981 election. The results of the last elections showed a weakened electoral base for the French Communist Party (PCF). The changes in political alignment and in the ideological platforms of both the right and the Socialists were clear proof that a shift to the right in French ideological and political life had occurred. The same thing had happened in the other principal capitalist countries several years earlier.

The change of goals was highlighted by the social and economic policies of the Chirac cabinet. Assessing that policy, the London Times said that the French government was "unashamedly copying" Margaret Thatcher's experience.

During the Chirac's cabinet two years in power, eleven government-owned banks and industrial companies have been privatized, which amounted to a massive, almost 50 per cent denationalization if one considers the value of the assets involved. A skilful publicity campaign made it possible initially to sell the reform to the population. The fact that about 4 million people bought shares in the enterprises was promptly hailed by the government as the triumph of "people's capitalism." Following the declared commitment to improve government finances, the cabinet went on to cut government taxes, with the biggest tax rebates offered on profits of enterprises. Administrative controls were lifted on prices, rents and redundancies, and direct control of the financial market and currency operations was abolished.

The right continued the policy of economic austerity pursued by the Socialists since 1983. They expected that an improvement in the world market situation and renewed confidence on the part of enterpreneurs in "their government" would boost economic buoyancy and alleviate social problems. The crash on the stock exchanges last autumn caused heavy financial losses to small shareholders and dealt a sudden blow to the popularity of denationalization. The practical consequences of reprivatization put paid to the myth of "people's capitalism." As much as half the shares in denationalized companies were distributed among industrial firms and credit institutions handpicked by the government. They came to be known as the "hard core." Press organs never noted for their sympathy for the left reported that the Prime Minister's party had used denationalilzation to strengthen its economic and political influence by giving preference to RPR supporters in naming the "hard core," and that it had helped a narrow circle of people gain control of much of industry and banking.

Latest news number one: François Mitterrand has decided to run for presidency for the fourth time.

Photo from L'Express (France)

In handing out tax and other privileges to enterpreneurs and the wealthy social strata, the cabinet often impinged on the interests of the working people. The freedom to sack employees advocated by the government undermined social safeguards, and tax rebates exacerbated inequities in the distribution of incomes and wealth. The government openly catered to the demands of its electoral clients, but did not risk dismantling the social security system for fear of raising the political temperature.

Higher economic growth proved insufficient to stem the rise of unemployment, which reached 2.6 million. It was only in late 1987 that the unemployment rate froze at this high level. Despite the record growth of profits, the industrialists were not in a hurry to increase their investment.

Instability in foreign trade became greater, which reflected the malaise affecting the French economy. A sharp drop in competitiveness was the price of delayed modernization.

The failure of all attempts to bring about a drastic improvement in the economy - from the "socialist experiment" in the early eighties to the latest "conservative option" - increased popular scepticism about the ability of the political parties to handle economic problems and implement their programmes. Failure to meet election promises resulted in a loss of credibility for the political establishment as a whole. As a result, some workers withdrew from political life, and concentrated on their personal affairs.

The growing popularity of liberalism did not mean a victory for conservative ideology. The average Frenchman continued to support the principles of social equality, and still wanted a less harsh and alienated society than one run entirely according to the laws of capitalist competition. This "detail" was overlooked by the Chirac government, which tried to impose a conservative system of values. In fact, an approximate balance between various ideological and political trends has remained as reflected in "ideological dual power."

The newspaper Le Monde described the current presidential campaign as "le tournoi des masques"(a contest of masks). The Social Democrats and the Conservatives have moved closer to each other on matters of principle, which has narrowed the gap in the approaches of the parties to key domestic and international issues. The emerging political consensus in the country was sealed by the "cohabitation" of a president and prime minister from different camps. Today, none of the real presidential hopefuls can offer an alternative to the kind of "crisis management" that has existed in recent years. Their platforms are variations on a single theme.

Who are the protagonists in the electoral campaign which is in so many ways uncharacteristic of French political tradition? Observers name Raymond Barre, Jacques Chirac and François Mitterrand, who recently announced that he would seek another term. Other candidates have virtually no chance of challenging the "big three."

Barre, although connected with the UDF and enjoying its support, seeks to project the image of a leader who stands above party politics. The prestige of the erstwhile economic professor rests largely on his reputation as a competent economist.

Barre, who has long been the front-runner in the popularity ratings among the right-wing candidates, has in recent weeks been losing ground to Chirac. To play the only credible role he can play, i.e., that of the man who will save the national economy, Barre has had to dramatize the situation. However, the mutual commitments of the right-wing parties in the alliance narrow his scope in criticizing the government's record.

Jacques Chirac, backed by the well-oiled RPR machinery, made a vigorous start in the campaign. His main task is to present the results of his two years in office in the most favourable possible light. It must be admitted that public opinion concerning the government's policy has recently been getting more favourable. This has something to do with fading memories of its setbacks and the "electoral gifts" the cabinet has offered various sections of the population. During the crisis years the French had got so used to the steady growth of unemployment that they perceived a temporary stabilization in the unemployment rate as a success for the economic policy. The new balance between the institutions of power under the "cohabitation" setup is seen in a more positive light. For all these reasons Chirac's popularity has grown, while that of Barre, who is a resolute opponent of "cohabitation," has fallen.

The outcome of the duel between the two leading right-wing candidates in the first round is anything but certain. But in the second round the winner may be faced with the delicate "problem of Le Pen," who has also thrown down the gauntlet. His constituency is recruited from among small proprietors and the social groups that have been hardest hit by unemployment. In voting for the National Front, they are protesting against their material insecurity and the inability of their rulers to improve their lot. How are these votes to be won in the second round without antagonizing the moderate voter, who is suspicious of the openly racist rhetoric of the extreme right-wing leader? So far Chirac and Barre have preferred not to notice the "Le Pen phenomenon."

Judging from opinion polls, Mitterrand is the recognized favourite in this year's campaign. No French president, including Charles de Gaulle, has completed seven years with such an impressive record of popularity. It was under him that the institutions of the Fifth Republic were subjected to the test of "cohabitation." While dissociating himself from those actions of the cabinet which seemed odious in the eyes of the left-wing electorate, Mitterrand let the right-wing majority run the country. This strategy enabled the head of state to secure the image of national arbiter which has earned him support far beyond the French Socialist Party.

Political scientists believe that Mitterrand has come up with psychologically correct answers to French worries. The growing instability that marked the long-drawn-out economic crisis has increased the feeling of anxiety among the populace. The tactic of delaying the annoucement of his entry into the race until the last moment has also paid off. Thanks to this tactic, Mitterrand has been protected from criticism from opponents by his presidential status creating the impression that he was outside the "electoral sweepstakes."

The French Communists have put up as their candidate André Lajoinie, a candidate member of the Political Bureau, Secretary of the Central Committee of the FCP. His electoral platform includes urgent measures to develop the national economy and cut down unemployment, increase the incomes and extend the rights of the working people, and have France join the nuclear disarmament process together with other countries.

Local observers have varying views on the 1988 electoral campaign. Some compare it to a "psychoanalytic session," others to a "game of poker" in which the ability to bluff counts more than anything. Still others lament the fact that the campaign has turned out to be unusually bland and has ignored the numerous problems confronting France. Whatever the results of voting on April 24 and May 8, the new leadership will have to come to grips with these problems. ■

SILENT

Chemical weapons today ● How to ban and eliminate them ● What impedes the conclusion of a convention in Geneva

These questions are discussed below by chief Ministry of Defence expert, Lieutenant General ANATOLY KUNTSEVICH, Hero of Socialist Labour, Member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, in an interview granted New Times

Stages of the U.S. Binary Programme

1954-60:
The Chemical Corps of the U.S. Army begins work on the binary weapons programme.

1960-62:
The U.S. Navy begins work on its own binary programme.

1965:
The Big Eye binary chemical bomb is patented (U.S. Navy and Air Force).

1973-74:
The XM-736 howitzer shell with binary charge goes on the drawing boards.

Chemical weapons are perhaps the oldest of all mass destruction weapons. They date back to the first world war. However, after Hiroshima and Nagasaki toxic agents, these "silent killers," were, so to speak, overshadowed by the nuclear weapon. What role do present-day military doctrines assign chemical weapons?

When, on April 22, 1915, the Germans for the first time in history used poison gas against French positions they themselves did not expect this new weapon to have such a colossal military and psychological effect. It came as a shock to all. Since then toxic agents have been an integral component of the arsenals of offensive weaponry. But you are right - after World War II, when the nuclear arms race began, chemical weapons seemed to have been relegated to the background. Nevertheless they have been constantly developed and stockpiled.

The present U.S. military doctrine, as can be seen from an analysis of U.S. Army field regulations, are intended exclusively for offensive operations, specifically, the destruction of the manpower of the adversary.

Today, however, the fact that the use of chemical weapons in a theatre of hostilities will affect not only and not so much the troops as the noncombatant civilian population, must be borne in mind. The troops have special protective equipment, whereas the population does not have enough of such equipment at its disposal. It is clear, then, that in a war in which chemical weapons are used, millions of people would die.

A huge quantity of toxic agents has been accumulated to date. It is no secret that the main arsenals of these weapons belong to the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. The Soviet Union, unlike the United States, has disclosed the dimensions of its stockpiles, stating that an approximate parity exists in this sphere.

To begin with, I would like to stress that in the West, especially in recent years, there has been a great deal of speculation about the Soviet reserves of chemical weapons, which it has been alleged, are much greater than the American. To put an end to all kinds of rumours and exaggerations, we openly revealed the size of our arsenal. Let me say this was a gesture of good will, inasmuch as the exchange of information concerning the reserves of both countries was to have come later, with progress towards the conclusion of a convention on the total prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons. The figure is now generally known: about 50,000 tons. Yes, we did say that an approximate parity exists.

But let us examine three aspects of this question: the quantitative and qualitative aspects and how U.S. chemical weapons are distributed worldwide.

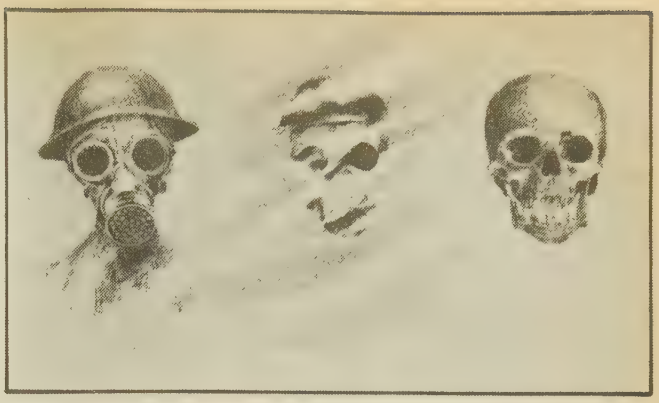
First, the quantity. The arsenal of U.S. toxic agents was built up in the 1950s and 1960s. The production of sarin, for instance, started in 1953, and that of the VX paralytic nerve gas, in 1961. Between 1953 and 1959 about 50,000 tons of sarin were produced in the U.S. How much was produced between 1959 and 1969 is unknown. Several tens of thousands of tons, most likely. About 10,000 tons of VX were produced in the same period. Add to this some 20,000 tons of yperite, plus huge quantities of irritants. According to my estimates, the American arsenal of toxic agents totals more than 100,000 tons. These, I repeat, are my own estimates; officially, the U.S. has not released any data about its reserves.

Now about the qualitative aspect. Organic phosphorus toxic agents produced as far back as 20 or 30 years ago have not lost their combat effectiveness; more, they will retain it until next century. That is in the nature of these agents. Thus, the argument that the U.S. chemical arsenal is obsolete is not valid. It is, of course, morally obsolete, because the U.S. by all the signs has developed new, more lethal agents.

Lastly, the third aspect - the spread of chemical weapons. The Soviet Union has no such weapons anywhere outside its own territory. The American arsenal, on the other hand, is spread all over the world: in Western Europe - for use on our continent, on Johnston atoll in the Pacific and Japan, for possible use in the Asian and Pacific region, on Diego Garcia Island, for the Indian Ocean theatre. In other words, even the strategic distribution of American chemical weapons gives the U.S. certain advantages. This is obvious even to the uninitiated.

Nevertheless Washington recently announced that it was starting the production of binary charges - for artillery shells and Big Eye bombs. What is behind this decision? What threat is held out by this new

KILLERS



type of "silent killer"? What toxic agents will be used in the new projectiles? The Soviet press has mentioned the VX-2 nerve gas, for example.

That decision was prompted above all by the desire to build up the U.S. chemical potential. I may remind you that President Reagan announced a programme of modernization of chemical weapons as far back as 1982. And he has no intention of departing from it. The decision he took last December to launch full-scale quantity production of binary weapons was, I believe, a concession to the ultra-reactionaries following the signing of the INF treaty. Although one would have thought the signing of that document ought to have had a positive influence also on the negotiations on the banning and elimination of chemical weapons.

The danger with which the new generation of chemical weapons is fraught consists in their colossal toxicity and, consequently, their destructive power. However, we do not know exactly what sort of hellish cocktail will be produced by the two components because the formula of the new toxic agent is unknown to us. Such information is naturally top secret. Reports to the effect that the binary weapons would contain VX-2 did appear in the American press and this was the source of the reports in our own press. But what if this was a deliberate leak designed to mislead us? Can it be believed? For the known toxic agents there are antidotes, but if some altogether new agents are used on the battlefield we would not know either their effect or how to counter them.

Binary weapons present enormous difficulties also for verification since the components can be stored at a considerable distance from each other. Besides, with the advent of binary weapons the danger of their spread arises.

Apart from the militaristic essence of the U.S. chemical weapons programme it obviously has a negative effect on the multilateral negotiations in Geneva.

Incidentally, according to the head of a Canadian firm collaborating with the Pentagon in the sphere of chemical warfare weapons, contracts concluded by the U.S. Defence Department with leading American chemical companies are long-term arrangements. Moreover, the latter were given assurances that the present administration would do everything to see to it that the negotiations in Geneva would not hinder the development and manufacture of binary weapons for the next 5-7 years at least.

Well, that is added confirmation of Washington's reluctance to conclude a convention in the foreseeable future. Your mention of that Canadian businessman prompts me to dwell on the position of the United States' allies. It is my impression that when it comes to chemical weapons we tend to forget that the U.S. binary programme is being elaborated in cooperation with Britain, the F.R.G., Australia and France.

I may remind you also that it was with the approval of its allies that Washington decided in principle to launch the binary programme in 1985. True, some of them had reservations, but the majority nevertheless supported the U.S. As a matter of fact, the decisive factor in obtaining Congressional approval of the appropriation of funds for the programme was the consent of the allies. Thus, the allies must bear in mind that they too are responsible for the new spiral in the chemical arms race. This must be put quite plainly.

And so if today calls for the speedy conclusion of a convention are issued from West European capitals, we have every right to expect that these admirable sentiments and good wishes will be backed up by real and concrete actions - say, pressure on Washington to alter its position at the Geneva talks and reconsider its decision on binary weapons.

The impression is that the situation in Geneva is complicated not only by the U.S. binary programme but by several other factors as well - for instance, the position of the French delegation.

Yes, you are right. In concrete terms what Paris wants is to have a sort of "reserve of security" after the convention is signed and enters into force. In other words, to build up and modernize its own potential. In my opinion, this is a manifestation of the policy of the French leadership aimed at possessing all the most sophisticated weapons of mass destruction. As far as is known, the French army is equipped with practically the same chemical weapons as the American, and the French chemical programme is being implemented rather quickly. Moreover, there is evidence that France is working on the production also of binary chemical weapons.

It must be said that apart from the depressing U.S. decision on binary weapons, the American delegation at Geneva has latterly begun to shy away from the total prohibition and abolition of chemical weapons envisaged in the future convention. The U.S. delegates are talking about the partial prohibition of the "silent killers" and proposing half-measures.

For a long time the U.S. and some other Western countries made the problem of verification an obstacle to the conclusion of a convention.

We removed these obstacles by agreeing to practically all the proposals made by our negotiating partners. I may say that we went even farther in expanding and tightening the verification measures. The Americans probably had not expected this, and began to backtrack. Where formerly they had insisted on total verification, the moment we agreed,

1975:
The technological development of the 155-mm XM-687 shell is completed.

1980:
The House of Representatives adopts a decision on the construction of a plant for the production of binary shells.

1982:
The President announces a programme to update chemical weapons.

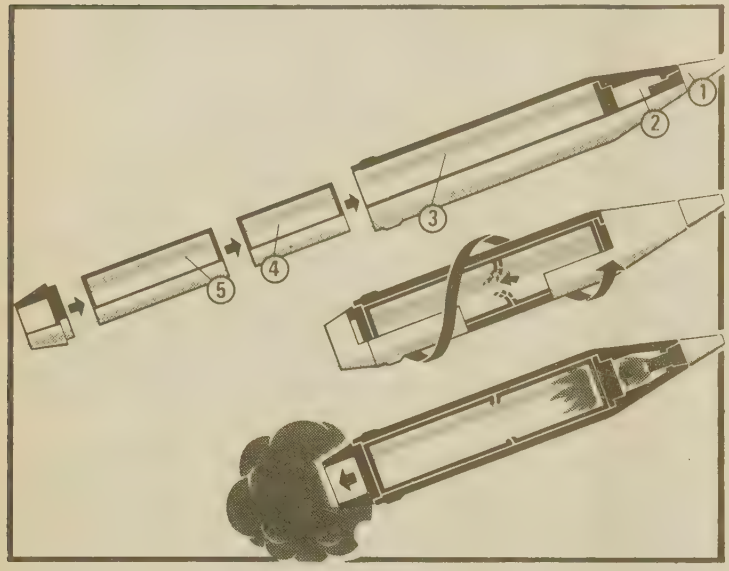
1983-84:
The production of XM-687 shells begins.

1985:
quantity production of XM-736 shells begins.

1987:
The President sanctions full-scale quantity production of binary chemical weapons.

they switched over to the argument that it was impossible to control private firms and enterprises. In other words, they are casting about for loopholes for circumventing the convention. However, verification must be total, all installations without exception must be subject to control.

Let me repeat: the equipment of the U.S. armed forces with binary weapons will make verification extremely difficult. Binary weapons, too, must be covered by the convention and be subject to abolition.



An infernal cocktail
1 - fuse; 2 - bursting charge; 3 - free space; 4, 5 - capsules with toxic agent components; on firing the shell, the partition between the components breaks down. In flight, the shell revolves at 25 r.p.s. The reaction producing the toxic agent is complete by the moment it approaches the target.
From Spiegel (F.R.G.)

Let us be optimistic and hope that the convention will eventually be signed and enter into force. After a prescribed period, the destruction of the stocks of chemical weapons will begin - in our country a plant for this purpose will soon be commissioned in Chapaevsk. What will happen to the toxic agents? Will they be simply burned or can they, pehaps, be used to make, say, perfume?

First of all let me say that one of the purposes of the Chapaevsk plant will be to find optimal ways of destroying the toxic agents, to work out a technology that will ensure that the entire process will be effected at minimal expense and with no risk to the environment.

To reprocess toxic agents into perfume is of course theoretically possible. But this is an extremely expensive proposition. Reversing the technological process is exceedingly complicated, involving, moreover, the observance of the strictest precautionary measures. Indeed you could have seen this for yourself last autumn in Shikhany when we demonstrated our chemical warfare means and how they can be destroyed.

Of course, we are studying and weighing all the possibilities: whether to send it all up in smoke or to use the basic substances obtained in the process for the needs, say, of the national economy. But, I repeat, this is a very costly process.

You mentioned Shikhany. Could one say that this demonstration has had a positive effect on the progress of the negotiations? It is claimed in the West that the Soviet Union showed only its obsolete types of weapons.

I had occasion to talk to participants in the Geneva Disarmament Conference literally the day after U.S.S.R. Foreign Minister Shevardnadze invited them to visit Shikhany. This project was well known and talked about abroad. The Soviet Union's invitation therefore had the effect of a bombshell. The more so since we invited representatives of about 40 countries. Soon afterwards, it was suggested that the demonstration programme be expanded, to which we promptly agreed. As a matter of fact, we demonstrated not simply samples of the means of chemical warfare at the disposal of our armed forces but the entire Shikhany establishment. Experts could make their own evaluations on the spot.

Of course the demonstration in Shikhany did much to strengthen confidence. Moreover most of the participants in the negotiations had an opportunity for the first time to see chemical weapons and their effect on the living organism, and this is also very important. As for the talk about the "obsolescence" of the Soviet chemical weapons that were demonstrated in Shikhany, that is a clear attempt to belittle the significance of this highly important move on the part of the U.S.S.R. Unfortunately, the decision of the U.S. administration to launch its binary programme has spoiled the atmosphere at the Geneva talks, it has dealt them a serious blow.

I must say I never doubted that the U.S. would launch its binary programme in any case. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union has stopped the production of chemical weapons and has made public the size of its own stocks. Do you think it wise to do so under the circumstances?

As I have already said, according to my own calculations, we have less chemical weapons than the Americans. Nevertheless, we took this bold political decision. In taking this step we were guided above all by political considerations. It was one more example of the new philosophy of peace proclaimed by the U.S.S.R. on January 15, 1986. We believed that this example would find support, that it would be followed. But you see how things stand with chemical weapons.

Therefore, bearing in mind the security interests of the U.S.S.R. and its allies, we are compelled by the trend of developments to take seriously into account the fact that the U.S. forces will be armed with new and extremely dangerous chemical weapons. The binary shell is becoming a "super-weapon." Incidentally, the launching of the binary programme is nothing but a tribute to the combat efficiency of chemical weapons and this is precisely why the U.S. is giving a bad example today by not only possessing this weapon, but also by using it, as evidenced by the events in the Middle East. Of course we should not harden our stand in Geneva and still less should we slam the door on the negotiations. That would be simply irrational.

The most important thing at present is to do everything possible to ensure the success of the Geneva forum. A recent statement issued by neutral and non-aligned countries urges the participants in the negotiations to work for it. The Soviet position on the complete prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons under the most effective control is well known. On March 15 the U.S.S.R. Foreign Ministry reaffirmed the determination of the Soviet Union to do everything in its power to ensure that the relevant international convention should become a political reality in the nearest future.

I thank you, Lieutenant General for this interview.

Interviewer DMITRY POGORZHELSKY

Sam Nunn:

Apprehensions remain

A New Times reporter had a talk with Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and a prominent representative of the right wing of the Democratic Party, who has recently visited Moscow

New Times. Have you learned anything new for you about Soviet policy after the meetings you had with politicians, scientists and experts, and at the Soviet Academy of Sciences' Institute of Space Research?

Sam Nunn. This is my third visit to the Soviet Union. We've had good discussions with Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, Supreme Soviet deputies, scientists and experts. We've heard about your plans in space exploration and have had a great deal of discussion about stability, what the definition of stability is on both sides. The difficulties of verifying mobile missiles were examined. For instance, we've talked about the difficulties of verifying sea-launched cruise missiles, whether they are nuclear or conventional. All these subjects have been discussed, I think, in a very fair and candid way. I believe this kind of exchanges, particularly where you have scientific and technical experts on both sides, as well as people representing the policy set, are very fruitful and constructive for the future.

N.T. At the meeting with Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze you said that you wanted to know more about the Soviet concept of defence. As far as I understand, you have received firsthand information on this question. What do you think now about the concept of "reasonable sufficiency?"

S.N. Well, I get the idea that this is a concept which is now being thought about in the Soviet Union but has not been completely thought through. We discussed it in Moscow with several of the deputies, including military representatives. We are very interested in pursuing this because we in NATO believe that we are in a defensive posture. It is important that our military have military communications on this point because what we believe to be defensive you may have some apprehensions about it. We know this from our point of view: the very large tank armies you have and your training patterns which we perceive to be the blitzkrieg-type of training for offensive operations. One of the reasons we rely on the first use of nuclear weapons, the first-use doctrine, is because we feel we have a profound disadvantage in terms of conventional forces. So these tanks go together, and I believe the doctrine of "defensive sufficiency" is one that should be pursued both in this country and in NATO.

N.T. The imbalance between the historically shaped patterns of the armed forces of both sides calls for an objective analysis of the asymmetry. You have talked about the Warsaw Treaty countries' superiority in tanks. But does NATO not have superiority in weapons of other types?

S.N. General Sergei Akhromeyev stated he felt NATO had an advantage in the tactical air and in combat helicopters. We disagreed with those numbers. We feel the numbers are more favourable to you. But we do believe that we have some quality in certain types of systems. So you cannot just consider quantity. You have also to consider quality.

N.T. What types of systems do you mean?

S.N. Well, I think about tactical aircraft. But we do think we've got quality in some of our tactical aircraft. And these are things that have to be considered by military experts. We cannot simply count numbers. We have to go beyond that. But we have to start with the numbers count. I think we also have to start with the exchange of data. We have conducted mutual balanced force reduction talks for about 15 years now, and we still have to go beyond the basic disagreement on data. So my own view is that we have to find some bold and new ways to use what General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev termed "new thinking" in conventional arms control.

I also believe that over a period of time we shall have to discuss seriously what I would call confidence-building measures. They would make sure that we don't have the capacity for a surprise attack on either side. For instance, if we had inspectors on railway junctions in Eastern Europe and the western districts of the Soviet Union and you had inspectors full-time in some of the areas where we would have to mobilize to mount a surprise attack, if we both had inspectors or military representatives at the various airfields from which tactical air power would have to be launched, then we could start building confidence. This may be something that governments have to consider – I speak it only on myself. But we may very well need to put in place some form of verification and confidence building as a condition for advance towards substantive reductions.

We don't believe our advantages are reflected in an offensive capability. I don't think NATO even trains for offensive operations. We have never had the capacity for sustaining ourselves very long in battle. That's one of the things I noted in the past. We would give out the ammunition and supplies very quickly. The Soviet Union is in much more of a position to sustain a longer battle. And so one of these things comes into play: readiness, sustainability, training, mobilization capability, plans of communication, the link of each side's forces from the battlefield, the amount of time it takes to resupply from the United States, the quality of weapons and the quantity of weapons – all of these things will have to be considered.

I would say that the complex of conventional arms control compared to nuclear arms control is immense. That's why, I believe, we need to do some new thinking, consider the possibility of having data exchanges, discuss military doctrines and hold discussions which the Soviet Union has proposed on these problems, and also work out possible verification measures before we come to final conclusions on substantive reductions.

N.T. What impact, do you think, can the NATO summit in Brussels have on the process of ratification of the INF treaty in the U.S. Senate? Is it possible that the Senate will adopt amendments linking the INF forces to be scrapped under the treaty to the conventional arms in Europe?

S.N. I think we'll have some amendments, but the question is whether they'll get the necessary 50 votes. There is profound concern in our country about the conventional imbalance. Many feel we would have to start with conventional arms control and then work our way up to nuclear arms control. We are also concerned about the continued Soviet military presence in Afghanistan and the possible violations of the ABM treaty with the

location of the Krasnoyarsk radar. All of these things may become the subject of amendments. But the general reaction in the U.S. Senate to the INF treaty is a positive one. I believe that efforts will be made on both sides – the Republicans and the Democrats – to make sure we don't have amendments that would cripple the treaty or render it ineffective. So I think within that context we'll see a lot of discussions. But, I think, in the final analysis the treaty will be ratified by the U.S. Senate.

N.T. Is there any link between the working out of a treaty on a 50 per cent reduction of strategic offensive weapons and the implementation of the SDI programme?

S.N. I would hope that the SDI and ABM discussions could be deleted from the strategic arms discussions. Even if they are linked, there must be no ambiguity here. It is important that we have certainty on both sides. I think nothing would be more detrimental in the long run than for us to start down the road of reductions of offensive forces and then have allegations from one side and the other about breaches of the ABM treaty. This would bring us to the rearmament programme and set back arms control 20 or 30 years.

N.T. What are, in your opinion, the prospects of a treaty on a 50 per cent reduction of strategic offensive weapons having been drafted by the time of the summit meeting in Moscow?

S.N. I don't want to make a forecast. I do think that difficult problems are still unresolved, particularly in the area we discussed in Moscow – the verification of mobile missiles. I personally think – and I don't speak for anyone but for myself on any of these points – that we would all be better served if we had single-warhead ground systems, if we did not have mobile groundbased MIRV systems. If both sides could agree on that, it would facilitate verification and enhance stability. We also discussed with Soviet experts the question of sea-launched cruise missiles. If we have limits on these missiles, we must figure out how to verify them, because both sides agreed to have conditions and limitations only on the nuclear side, not the conventional. And that's a very difficult verification problem.

I don't think it's impossible for these things to be worked out by the summit. But I think it would be better if both sides decided they were going for a solid agreement, even if they didn't reach it in any arbitrary time frame. I believe in the continuity of foreign policy in our country. I believe that the work President Reagan has done or will start in the field of strategic arms control will be continued by the next administration, whether Democratic or Republican.

Interviewer MIKHAIL SVETLICHNY

A SOVIET EXPERT'S VIEW

Any grounds for apprehensions?

In his interview, Sam Nunn admits NATO's superiority in tactical aircraft and combat helicopters. Let's take American data. The Warsaw Pact has 2,300 and NATO 3,450 fighter-bombers and assault planes and, respectively, 2,900 and 7,250 combat and transport helicopters. Both sides agree that NATO's aircraft are superior in their flying range and in the tonnage of bombs and missiles they can deliver to targets.

Let's also examine the potential of both sides in the conduct of offensive operations. According to the rules of the art of warfare, a state must have a triple preponderance over the enemy to mount offensive operations. The U.S. field manual FM 100-5, which, incidentally, treats offensive as the main type of combat operations, says that a sixfold preponderance of force is necessary in the direction of the main attack.

It is evident that neither the Warsaw Pact nor NATO is in a position to build such a superiority.

The combat readiness of the Warsaw Treaty's armed forces is high indeed. But no less so is the combat rediness of the NATO forces. Today, in time of peace, NATO troops are effectively deployed in areas of possible operations. They have an extensive combat-direction and communication system and are ready, within a matter of hours, to start carrying out their combat tasks.

Numerous exercises are conducted to perfect their combat skill. Last autumn, over 250,000 NATO troops were alerted on West German territory alone. Nine large-scale games and more than 5,000 tactical exercises were held in the course of manoeuvres there. The strength of Soviet troops involved in exercises does not exceed 20,000-25,000 men.

As for the mobilization potentials of the sides, NATO has a preponderance in this field, as the population of its member countries is nearly 50 per cent larger than that of the Warsaw Treaty states (620:375 million people). The North Atlantic alliance also has bigger capacities in the manufacture of weapons of various types.

And now about Washington's concern over the imbalance in conventional armaments. Historically, the armed forces of the two blocs have developed in different ways. The Soviet Union has repeatedly declared its readiness to eliminate existing imbalances by cutting the "surpluses" of both sides.

But NATO has not yet responded to proposals of this kind. Incidentally, there is approximate parity between the two blocs in their armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe. Here are the latest data provided by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies: 2,385,000 men in NATO's regular troops as against 2,292,000 men in the armed forces of the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

According to Soviet estimates, NATO, France and Spain included, has 94 divisions in combat readiness as against 78 divisions in the Warsaw Pact.

Speaking of assymetry and imbalances, we should also note that NATO has a threefold superiority over the Warsaw Pact in the number of battleships, cruisers and missile-carrying frigates, a 2.5-fold superiority in naval aircraft, and a twofold superiority in the aggregate tonnage of the ships and navies of its member states.

It is impossible to conceal this superiority. But the NATO leaders are not going to eliminate the asymmetry in this field. On the contrary, they demand that air forces and navies should be excluded from the agenda of future talks. No wonder that over the past 20 years the NATO countries have avoided considering the total military balance, proposing to discuss only what is advantageous to themselves.

In my opinion, talks will be meaningful if both sides discuss mutual and simultaneous elimination of asymmetry and imbalances and a reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments to a level of reasonable sufficiency.

I think Sam Nunn made his reference to Afghanistan by force of habit. The Soviet statements on the Afghan issue are clear.

My last remark concerns the Krasnoyarsk radar station. Not long ago the project was visited by a group of U.S. Congressmen. The construction of the station has been suspended for a year and will not be resumed provided the United States takes similar action with regard to its radar station in Britain.

Major General RAIR SIMONYAN, a military expert

Underground resistance in Chile

VOLODIA TEITELBOIM,
member of the Political Commission and Secretariat, Central Committee, Communist Party of Chile

Last October I interrupted my perennial exile to pay an illegal visit to Chile in order to attend a plenary meeting of our party's Central Committee. I resolved to do so in defiance of Pinochet's law banning our party and the entry into the country of "undesirable persons," i.e., those who still appear on the list of "sinners." What we respect, however, is not the law of the dictatorship but the law of life, the law of the people, the law of justice. The law which stems from our duty as members of the Communist Party, as revolutionaries. My comrades and I had to visit our homeland to plunge into its atmosphere, political and human, and, in the midst of our people, fight the tyrant shoulder to shoulder with them.

What did we feel as we circumvented the vigilance of police agents and saw our country again after so many years of absence. Above all, we felt as though we had never left it. We were overjoyed to see for ourselves that our people had not surrendered, that Chile did not support Pinochet but was opposed to him, that Chile had remained Chile. We found that people were not silent. They no longer voiced their discontent in undertones. They were protesting everywhere, day and night, in different forms. We witnessed a nationwide strike on October 7, 1987, sponsored by the National Council of Chilean Workers, when the city came to a standstill, fires were lit in the streets, and thousands of barricades were erected. The strike showed us once again that the Chilean people had only been wounded, that the dictatorship had failed to kill them or to destroy their indomitable spirit.

While in Santiago, we saw two countries, two Chiles. One was a Chile living Hollywood-style, in luxury and extravagance. There, life resembled the last day of festivities, a feast in Pompeii shortly before it was engulfed in a sea of boiling lava from Mount Vesuvius. The population of that country is not large, consisting of only a handful of very rich people. Pinochet's radio and television constantly peddle to Chileans the demagogic slogan that "Chile is a land of proprietors, not proletarians."

The other Chile is a country whose 6-million-strong population is very poor, a country where 25 per cent of the poor do not even earn subsistence wages and where 26 per cent of the people work just for food. Yes, they are also "proprietors." But they only have their hunger, their poverty and their grievances to call their own. The number of destitute in Greater Santiago has recently trebled, while the number of poor has doubled. This is how Pinochet is implementing one of his widely advertised Seven Projects aimed at "completely eradicating extreme poverty." In fact, the poor of Chile have never been so poor. And while one in every 10,000 Chileans is very rich, 6,000 are very poor. The "old poor" have been joined by the "new poor." There is also an intermediate stratum fighting poverty in order to push their way into the lower or upper middle class.

Meanwhile, in the other Chile, luxury has never been so blatant, so insulting, so shocking and so insatiable. Professional speculators are auctioning Chile off, giving the entire national sector of the country's economy to multinationals. This sector is controlled by forty thieves, piranas, those who were rich before, and the nouveaux riches, who have bought controlling interests in most of the enterprises. The extravagant Miss Universe circus is the official symbol of that country.

These people, who constitute Pinochet's social base, are few. Yet they are extremely voracious. The ruling clique they support relies mainly on the armed forces. It has made them the cornerstone of its domination, the main pillar of the dictatorship. If this pillar collapsed, Pinochet would be deposed in minutes.

Aware of his dependence on the army, the dictator has made the military a privileged caste. Corruption is rampant in their ranks. They are reaping enormous profits. Bolstered by the fascist constitution of 1980, they seek to perpetuate a military dictatorship in Chile and guarantee Pinochet power for life. Having vested the so-called National Security Council with unlimited powers, Chilean military doctrine has proclaimed the armed forces the supreme power with the right to veto any decision taken by a civilian government which could, theoretically,

come into existence in the future and which would in fact be a prisoner of the army, should it emerge whether now or in the 21st century.

In addition to the greedy local oligarchy, the despot who considers himself a genius is supported by foreign corporations battening on Chile. We were disgusted to see Pinochet on television kowtowing to the Australian capitalist Alan Bond. The dictator thanked him for the great honour he had done Chile by buying for a song El Indio, one of the world's richest gold and copper mines, as well as the state telephone company. It was disgusting to see imperialism and its go-betweens, Chilean and foreign, buying up promissory notes for our foreign debt in order to get the largest national enterprises dirt cheap.

There has never been a more anti-patriotic government in Chile or, perhaps, anywhere else. And this sellout of the country, this daily betrayal of our motherland, is accompanied each time by the playing of the national anthem and the hoisting of our national tricolour.

Pinochet is now engaged in Operation Smile. He lavishly dispenses promises to see if Chileans will swallow the bait and give him millions of votes as their presidential candidate. Yet all his gimmicks fail. Serious public opinion polls held in the country basically agree that over 80 per cent of Chileans reject the dictatorship and the dictator. This vast majority should be mobilized, united and turned into militant contingents. That was the main goal set by the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Chile.

We Communists vigorously advocate free elections as well as freedom everywhere. But there can be no such freedom for as long as Pinochet is in office. Ever since the day of the coup, we have proposed the unification of the opposition in order to put an end to this dark period in Chilean history and return to democracy. This calls for the overthrow of the dictatorship. The documents of our plenary meeting say that "the main conflict is that between those who support the authorities and those who want them to be replaced. Most Chileans – and especially we Communists – want the latter."

There is now a United Left coalition in Chile. The coalition is gaining in strength. The left in general have great influence in our country. People still remember the Popular Front and the Popular Unity which once won power and established the most progressive democratic forms of government. Today the left are the major unifying force in Chile. As the plenary meeting pointed out, this force is directed towards the initiation of joint actions by various democratic sectors. The difficulty is that neither the Christian Democratic leadership nor the other opposition groups on the centre and the right are showing any readiness for unity or a determined struggle against the dictatorship.

There is now an artificial standstill on the Chilean political scene in view of preparations for the plebiscite which, Pinochet hopes, will keep him in power. The Communists and all the left have from the outset proposed an agreement with the Christian Democrats to defeat Pinochet's farce by the constantly increasing mobilization of social forces whose protest, once it reaches its climax, would bring about a crisis of the dictatorship.

Of course, if we had been united and consistent in our struggle, the dictatorship would have been toppled long ago. But it was our disunity that permitted Pinochet not only to come to power but also to prolong his dictatorial rule. Unfortunately, there are reasons to believe that the disunity of the opposition will still keep the dictator in control and enable him to oppress the Chilean people and put off the triumph of freedom and democracy.

As far back as last July, the Political Commission of the Chilean Communist Party's Central Committee declared: "A united mass movement oriented towards mobilization and a more resolute struggle, towards determined opposition to the dictatorship, a movement which would say No to the plebiscite and propose a free and democratic election of a president and congress with executive and legislative powers, an automated vote count under democratic control and equal political rights for all parties – this movement would give the struggle for a free election a new dimension. On these terms compromises and agreements could be reached between all the democratic forces." The plenary meeting added: "We propose the unification of all opposition forces to oppose the plebiscite, and expose and thwart the farce being prepared by the dictatorship."

It should be noted that we have not renounced our orientation towards unity despite the dishonest behaviour of the Christian Democratic leadership, because many members of that party, as well as trade union, women's, youth and student leaders are supporters of general civilian mobilization. We believe that there can be no fair elections under Pinochet.

The opposition's disunity is arousing criticism in the country. This was demonstrated by the 20-day hunger strike in Valparaiso of two young Christian Democratic leaders, Waldo Garcia and Osvaldo Munoz who, at the risk of their

These pictures of Santiago street scenes, taken by a Stern photographer (F.R.G.), show how Pinochet's carabinieri deal with anti-dictatorship protests.

lives, demanded unity of the opposition and a demonstration in front of the headquarters of the Christian Democratic Party in Santiago. The CDP leaders cannot, of course, fail to take note of this.

As far as we Communists are concerned, we are adopting timely tactical decisions while following the strategic line of rejecting the plebiscite. We shall not be deceived either by the authorities' false promises or by the shrewd manoeuvres of the dictatorship, which has adopted a Law on Voting and Vote Counting. For this law was adopted by the world's most ludicrous legislature, consisting of four men whom no one has elected – three generals and an admiral. The law was cooked up to prolong the rule of Pinochet, whose police, armed forces, alcaldes and agents will impudently cheat at all stages of the plebiscite, manipulating preparation for it, the plebiscite itself and the counting of votes in line with the dictatorship's orders.

Chile is currently being veritably flooded with propaganda. While I was in the country, all newspapers, magazines and TV channels were full of the dictatorship's propaganda. The bootlickers literally deify the dictator. On TV, I saw a policeman disguised as a peasant heaping crude flattery on Pinochet. Cursing the American film star Christopher Reeve – the superman of the contemporary cinema who had arrived in Chile to express his solidarity with 80 Chilean artists threatened by death squads – the ersatz peasant shouted: "What do we need an American superman for if we have one of our own?"

This "superman" kisses babies after having had tens of thousands of Chileans murdered, announces from the screen that every 8 minutes a Chilean family moves into a new home, while in fact, during his rule the housing shortage has increased by a million dwellings, and repeats slogans more false than Judas' kiss: "Chile is our promised land," "Chile is on the threshold of a new era"... And meanwhile the international meeting of lawyers held recently in Chile cited appalling figures: 115,000 human rights violations have been registered in Chile over the last seven years. Add to them the violations committed during the previous seven years since the coup.

Crimes against Chileans continue. We saw Karin Eitel, a young lady recently named Chilean sportswoman of the year for conquering Aconcagua (the highest summit of the Andes in Chilean territory) and then Huayna Potosi, the highest peak in Bolivia. She was shown on television with marks of horrible torture to which she had been subjected by Pinochet's police. Have the authorities thereby intimidated the people? No! Ten actresses who were among the eighty artists threatened by the leaders of the death squad exposed the dictatorship's thugs. Such courage is typical of most Chilean women.

While in Chile, I was able to obtain a copy of Mikhail Gorbachev's book "For a Nuclear-Free World" published there underground, and decided to bring it to the Soviet Union for the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution and present it to the author. Soon afterwards there appeared "Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World," another book by the Soviet leader. Back in Moscow, I learned that this book was in enormous demand in Chile. It was one of the best sellers of the season. According to our journalist Marcela Otero, the success of the Soviet leader's book with Chilean readers "is a blow at the most anti-Communist regime on the continent."

In Chile, we found ourselves in an atmosphere of primitive, vicious and uninspired anti-communism. But we also saw a warm and friendly attitude towards the Soviet Union and unbounded admiration of the process of renovation embracing the broadest sections of Soviet society.

What is the reason for this? I believe that deep in its heart Chile has not ceased to be a democratic country. It has not, like the dictatorship tormenting it, turned its back on the times. Chileans were enormously impressed by Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the United States and the signing of the agreement to eliminate medium- and shorter-range missiles. Most Chileans welcomed the agreement as the first major step towards disarmament and as an unparalleled achievement on the road to peace.

The agreement has undoubtedly aroused the chagrin of Pinochet who, like his colleague Admiral Merino, dreams of putting an end to communism before the end fo the century. The eloquent admiral, a speaker as flamboyant as he is foolish, once said that World War III would be a symphony of military art, and that in the 21st century all governments would be military and all presidents generals or admirals.

To make a contribution towards this goal, Pinochet has already ceded to the United States the right to use Chile's Easter Island as an unsinkable aircraft carrier and Mataveri Airport as a base for U.S. airliners in the Pacific. He believes that in the future one should not stop short of a nuclear holocaust if it is necessary to destroy communism.

It is becoming increasingly evident that people like Pinochet belong to the category of atomaniacs. They are dangerous madmen, sly rogues who could take their unsuspecting enemies by surprise. They should be isolated. Today the dictator is alone against the whole world. The U.N. General Assembly has already strongly condemned the Chilean authorities 14 times for flagrant violations of human rights.

The primaries just over in Illinois have been won by Vice-President George Bush (Republican) and Senator Paul Simon (in what is the latter's first triumph over his Democratic rivals). What follows, however, is about the losers. One of them, Pat Robertson, the New Right's hope, has virtually dropped out of the race, but his success in Iowa and some other states is symptomatic of the political situation in the country.

The New Right's last hurrah?

IVAN ZADOROZHNYUK,
Cand. Sc (Phil.)

The star of Pat Robertson - the Baptist "TV pastor," the owner of the Christian Broadcasting Network, enormous even by U.S. standards - rose in the mid-eighties, amid fierce competition between top religious preachers. In Time magazine's opinion, the Evangelists "have changed the face of television; they may be gradually altering the very nature of American Christianity." Indeed, 200 television stations, 1,134 radio stations, 10 million cable-TV listeners and viewers are a force to be reckoned with in both religion and politics. In the mid-eighties, TV preachers received 1-2 billion dollars a year in donations as against 500 million in 1977. As many as 13.3 million Americans, or 6.2 per cent of total TV audiences, view sermons regularly: 21 per cent of them for no less than six minutes a week, and 40 per cent - for six minutes a month.

What is the secret behind the Evangelists' appeal to their TV parishioners? It probably lies above all in their claims to protect the "true faith," and their attempts to play the role of moral arbiters in resolving the acute contradictions in American society. And, last but not least, in their ability to provide "simple answers" to the complex questions besetting the ordinary American.

Save the West

Pat Robertson started his involvement in "big-time politics" at the end of the seventies. Like the Evangelical pastor Jerry Falwell, the leader of the conservative religious organization Moral Majority (renamed Liberty Federation in 1985. - **I.Z.**), Pat Robertson and his television company made a substantial contribution to Ronald Reagan's first victory in a presidential election. Right after the new President's inauguration ceremony, Robertson told TV viewers that he had prayed several times, and that God had told him that Ronald Reagan would win the election. The prediction had come true, to the preacher's great delight, and so he had prayed again, and the Almighty had intimated to him that the President had His blessing, and was above criticism...

Last year, however, when the Iran-contras scandal caused Reagan's prestige to plummet, Robertson decided that his turn to "save the Christian West" had come. In a TV sermon, he announced he was going to run for the White House himself on the Republican ticket in the 1988 presidential elections.

Pat Robertson has become the standard-bearer of the American Right (in both the religious and the political camp) who made the current President their mouthpiece. Today they are still clamouring for the revival of traditional religious and moral values, obligatory prayers in state schools, banning abortion, and restricting the political activity of women. In the opinion of Robertson and his followers, Americans must be prepared for Armageddon - the fight between the forces of good and evil.

Robertson is known as the "first-hour" preacher, because television companies offer him peak viewing time. The bulk of his audience is made up of Protestant Fundamentalists who venerate the Bible as the only source of the truth and who (in words, at least) adhere to extremely strict moral precepts. They see themselves as the harbingers of the "second coming of Christ." America is declared a "promised land," "the savior of mankind"; and the only way to attain peace and prosperity is perceived in following Apocalyptic prophecies backed by the nuclear arms race (allegedly favoured by God).

The TV Evangelists have sympathetic audiences. 64 per cent of Americans believe in an anthropomorphic God, and 26 per cent believe in God as the motive force in private and public life. In the mid-seventies, 50.8 million Americans, i.e., 30 per cent of the U.S. adult population intended to dedicate themselves to God; the figure has now grown to 69.4 million (40 per cent). The overwhelming majority of respondents (94 per cent) turned out to

be religious. Not all of them are resigned to the inevitability of Armageddon, of course, but many listen to the militant Fundamentalists.

While a sermon is in progress, TV viewers can ring Robertson's aides and get answers to their questions, sometimes from Pat "himself." For this purpose he buys up whole telephone lines, considering them good value for money when it comes to putting political pressure on viewers. Subscribers' phone numbers are stored on a computer, and one day a "Mr Smith" can hear a personal request to vote for this or that Robertson-backed candidate. Donations are seldom mentioned in such conversations - they flow in of their own accord, it seems.

Political transformations

And so, Pat Robertson, 57. The son of a Virginia Democratic senator, he started out as a Democrat himself. However, his calls to return to traditional religious morality, cut taxes levied on the rich and increase military spending suited the Right-wing Republicans better. Having thrown in his lot with Protestant Fundamentalists, Robertson said he prayed to become a president because he wanted to live up to the hopes of those who believed in him and who wanted to be told, in no uncertain terms, about conservative values. He urged his audience to rely on God and to make sacrifices in a noble cause.

Robertson the politician is a controversial figure, which is typical of modern America. He is by no means the first Democrat to turn Republican and a Right-wing one at that.

Pat is descended from the "Virginia Gentlemen," a clan of U.S. aristocracy "not too young" by Old World standards. His forebears include two presidents and many lawyers and politicians. However, he has enlisted the support of the middle class, and promised the poor to talk the rich into sharing their profits with them.

Having graduated from University, Robertson embarked at first on a business career. By his own account, he "turned to Christ" at the age of 26. "At my desk in my office, I leaned back in my chair and burst out laughing." It was at that moment that "the holy spirit" allegedly descended on him and he was "born again." Robertson even claims to have had a revelation and received the gift of healing the sick by laying hands on them. Journalists wisecracked that if Pat became president, there would no longer be any need for the Department of Health. It was reported that he was going to raise the standard of education and upbringing through introducing obligatory prayers in state schools. In dealing with other home and international problems, the new-style presidential candidate also relies on Providence, reporters say.

But let us go back to his career. The well-educated and wealthy young preacher was out to bring Evangelical consolation to the black Harlem poor. Having gained some experience there, he returned to his native Virginia in 1961 and became one of the first Protestant Fundamentalists to found a TV studio of his own.

Robertson says that in the United States today there is a spiritual upheaval as important as the Reformation or even the advent of Christianity. This upheaval is allegedly to change the face of the world. It boils down to the strengthening of faith in God and America. According to Robertson, it's still too early to sit back and relax, however. "Godless subversion" in the education system could "ruin the country."

Through the efforts of the Protestant Fundamentalists, humanism has become a dirty word with some Americans. In September 1986, for instance, parents of followers of Robertson in Alabama, Tennessee and some other Southern states spoke out in court against "humanitarian textbooks containing atheistic philosophy."

As far as foreign policy is concerned, Robertson is little short of obsessed with the ideas of Armageddon, by which he means the psosibility of a nuclear war to attain "divine" objectives. He makes his meaning clear by saying that Christian pacifism will not do here as it plays into the hands of "Godless Communists." In justification of such intolerance unfitting to a Christian clergyman, Robertson tells his TV flock that the adversaries of God and America could take any peace efforts for a sign of weakness. According to Robertson, the last fight between the forces of good and evil will end in the "fall of Soviet Russia."

Falling short of the White House

As the newspaper The Washington Post once wrote about TV preachers, "even though they may be fine people, the implication is: all they want is money." I don't think this assessment is very accurate: Robertson was the first of them to show that what they want today is not only money but real political power as well.

The road to the White House is not strewn with roses, as Robertson was promptly given to understand by his rivals. The New York Times carried an article from which it follows that the champion of faith has committed a sin traditional of American businessmen - tax evasion. The organizations he set up in support of the politicians and lawyers demanding obligatory prayers in state schools - "Robertson in 1988" (instituted in 1986 in preparation for elections) and others - total an estimated profit of 600 million dollars, while spending 500 million.

Before Robertson took up politics in earnest, his opponents were indifferent to his wealth. But when it comes to contesting the presidency, all arguments are put into play, including such as "a departure from the behests of the Founding Fathers," who objected to the church interfering in politics. This explains the metamorphoses in Robertson's statements. A few years ago he said that Washington had to belong to Jesus, and that the Evangelists had enough votes to make the country turn right. And now he stresses that he is running for president not as a clergyman, but as a politician. He promises to be a "commonsensical statesman," not a fanatic.

Robertson curries favour with small businessmen and farmers by promising them a tax cuts, and it is small wonder that his showing in rural Iowa is best. Remarkably, Robertson has many young parents among his followers; they usually bring their children along to the get-togethers with their idol.

Serious analysts queried the seriousness of Robertson's political campaign from the start, for all its momentary successes. After the 1986 Congressional elections, the American historian Schlesinger spoke of the "conservative phase of the eighties" coming to an end. "Kennedy's children," a generation which grew up and matured at the time of the Liberals' heyday and decline, are emerging onto the political scene. Therefore, the trend is bound to change towards the nineties, Schlesinger predicts. Evangelist politicians are on the verge of defeat, he concludes. I would add to this that several of Robertson's fellow-Americans who reject the sermons on Armageddon as a purgatory nuclear war stand in the way of Robertson's ambitions. These sermons are definitely out of date now. Newsweek comments that Robertson's nomination ought to be regarded not as a triumph of the New Right, but as their last hurrah.

Nevertheless, the hurrah has sounded loudly enough. It is still too early to leave the "electronic pastors" out of reckoning. First, Americans are never too eager to go to the polls at all. And second, the TV Evangelists may be found useful by politicians who would like to secure the support of believers by clothing Right-wing ideology in Christian robes.

Photo from Time magazine (U.S.A.)

In his speech at the February plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, Mikhail Gorbachev made a point of stressing and concentrating attention on ensuring the ideological basis of perestroika. Only by relying on progressive thinking, progressive political consciousness and a higher level of public commitment, is it possible to advance to a new quality of society and new frontiers of socialism.

New political culture

FYODOR BURLATSKY

■ Things have started moving in the country. Glasnost and democracy have given each one of us the opportunity to speak out about all that interests and troubles us. More has happened in the last three years than in whole decades in the past - so many issues have been brought up at political forums, in work collectives, in the press, literature, the theatre, films and on TV. Public opinion is becoming an increasingly important factor in acceleration.

But even the ancient appreciated that words must be followed up by deeds. Otherwise words only tend to sear the soul. It need hardly be said that destructive criticism is the lowest level of public opinion. Everybody rightly rejects the empty daydreaming that has for so long nurtured people on promises of a heaven on earth. But no less harmful is the other extreme - absurd escapades like empty soap bubbles that burst at the first contact with reality. What is needed most of all are effective businesslike efforts to accelerate the country's development and cure our economic and social ills.

As Mikhail Gorbachev put it at his meeting with leaders of the mass media and the creative unions, it is as if we all are learning democracy all over again. Everyone has to learn how to work in the new conditions - leaders and people alike, so that the seeds of a genuine political consciousness, which serves the cause of perestroika, can take root in the public mind.

■ Our political culture has a comparatively long tradition, though it should be added frankly, a contradictory one. And as Pushkin noted, tradition is the soul of the nation.

Our history is made up of Kiev Rus and the Novgorod Assembly, which few people talk about today, as well as of 300 years of the Tartar yoke, Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, the gloomy Nicholas I and the pitiful Nicholas II... Pushkin's phrase "the people are speechless" reflected the political traditions of autocratic rule. Shortly before he wrote that phrase, Jean-Jacques Rousseau passed a terrifying judgement: there will never be democracy in Russia as it is a land of slaves. People get the kind of government they deserve. Chaadayev, that melancholy Russian genius, predicted sorrowfully that Russia was a land without a future.

Fortunately, time proved him wrong, as it did the Geneva dreamer. In October 1917, a people oppressed for centuries, but never crushed, took a tremendous leap forward to democracy under the leadership of the Bolsheviks. "We are not slaves!" they insisted. But the road to people's power was a hard one, saturated in blood.

In Lenin's time workers, sailors, soldiers and peasants began to learn how to govern a country. But the lack of general and political awareness played no mean role in the fact that instead of government by the people we ended up with government for the people.

The trend towards the bureaucratization of government which Lenin fought vigorously was consolidated after his death. History has yet to pass judgement on those times. It will record all that was achieved for the first time ever in our country (and which we shall always be proud of) thanks to the selfless efforts of the party and our people as a whole in working for technical and social progress. It will also record what we cannot and have no right to forgive or justify - the persecutions of party members, army officers and intellectuals - the human tragedies.

Incidentally, it should be noted that the personality cult was not only imposed from above, but also reflected a certain political level of the masses.

■ The years following the 20th CPSU Congress were a mixture of good and bad. Guarantees were created to prevent any repetition of the personality cult or the purges. But no radical reform of our society was carried through. In the seventies, negative processes and unresolved problems began to pile up, and stagnation and conservatism set in.

Then came April 1985. It was not all that long ago. But so much has been packed into that short period. Glasnost, democratization, economic reforms: they have all stirred each of us to the depths.

A largely new Soviet political consciousness has begun to take shape under our very eyes. And as part of it, a politically-minded man, an active participant in the social process, with his own opinions and views, his own preferences, his own actions. That was when we discovered what we really should have expected all along. Our views do not coincide, they are not identical, although we all strongly support socialism, Soviet power, and the party's leadership of the country.

Where does the resistance to perestroika come from? Who personifies this opposition? Many people are convinced that it comes exclusively from the bureaucracy.

But they have no monopoly of this opposition. Those ordinary people who take a passive stand should also be regarded as obstructing perestroika, although, with few exceptions, people are taking a responsible attitude.

■ Let's begin, however, with the bureaucrats, since at present their influence is much greater and much more depends on them. For every executive, even at the lowest level, is faced with a choice. In his own limited field, he has to decide whether he should work for bold structural changes in working conditions and labour incentives, and encourage initiative, or whether he should move ahead slowly, making only small organizational and staffing changes.

It would seem self-evident that micro-reforms are the least effective - as they are neither fish nor fowl. But the dyed-in-the-wool bureaucrat will still bide his time and even, quietly, looking over his shoulder, try to stall in carrying out instructions received from the party on introducing team contract, encouraging cooperatives, family contracts and individual labour, and struggling effectively against corruption and unearned incomes.

After all, a decision is not a legal act that obliges a person to take a certain course of action or face sanctions - financial, administrative or even criminal. The old

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Fyodor Burlatsky, eminent Soviet writer and scholar. We bring you an excerpt from his latest book, "New Thinking."

laws will continue to operate for some time, as well as numerous instructions that to this day offer a safe haven to "over-cautious" officials on the spot.

● The June plenary meeting of the CC CPSU took into account the full significance of the legal form of social relations, the humanist and moral influence of socialist law. The plenary meeting considered a whole package of documents that were subsequently approved by the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet, and laid a firm legal foundation for the economic reforms. We hope that, now that all the proposed decisions have received full legal enactment, this will give a powerful spur to their implementation.

Apart from the bureaucrat of old and the over-cautious petty official, there is another type that is trying to surface - one who can adapt to any changes like a chameleon and who flourished in the past, one who deals in empty words. But what we need today is not successful mimicry (this time to perestroika) but loyalty to the cause, professionalism, and ordinary decency and sincerity.

One more example - the imitator. A person has been elected to a certain post - at a factory, scientific institution or creative organization. To what does he devote his efforts? To the common cause or to bettering his own position? If the new man accepts as his due the old system of having awards, bonuses and decorations showered on him and the opportunity to travel abroad, then it is clear he is using perestroika for his own selfish interests.

We also find that in addition to wholehearted supporters of perestroika, who can be said to have paid for it in sweat and blood by their personal efforts to see it through, there are people who in the past watched silently on the sidelines and are now trying to make up for lost time and stop at nothing - even the most extreme views. Of course, any viewpoint prompted by a desire to serve the cause of renewal deserves attention. But, as Marx observed, the right to criticise also implies the right to criticize back.

● For instance, we've heard thoughtless arguments about the inevitability and even usefulness of unemployment as a means of boosting labour productivity.

Guaranteed work and social security are the main gains of our socialist system. And no one in the country is prepared to give up what has been won at so high a price. But let's look at this issue from the practical point of view.

Managers at many enterprises have repeatedly said that they would be prepared to cut their labour force by a quarter or even a third, if they were allowed to use the money saved to increase the pay of the remaining staff. Taken on the scale of the country as a whole, a quarter means tens of millions of people. What would happen to them?

The state cannot afford to pay them pensions. But throwing them out onto the street would be unthinkable. This means that another solution has to be sought: the labour force has to be re-deployed and retrained. This means that serious thought has to be given to what state body will handle this countrywide, remembering that the problem will become increasingly acute as new techniques and technologies are introduced and labour productivity increases. And would it be fair to shift the burden of the period of transition to a new system of economic management onto the shoulders of the working people?

The dilemma - free market or planned economy? - is not an easy one either. Of course, the task today is to develop commodity-monetary relations. But arguments about which of the two to choose at this stage can only result in fruitless discussions instead of a search for ways of implementing structural reforms.

It is common knowledge that the problem of overcentralization and departmentalism is very acute today. 18 million people working in the management apparatus is far too high a price to pay for overdoing the principle of centralization. Presumably when, in keeping with the reform, enterprises and associations will become the main planning and production units, the staffs of ministries and departments can be cut by half or reduced to a third without detriment. But do we have to return to the idea of economic councils, i.e., go back to what proved a failure in the sixties?

At present we are acquiring experience in holding elections in work collectives and to the Soviets with a choice of several candidates. The first experiments revealed the need to improve the system of nominating candidates and running the election campaign, and the need to develop the political awareness of the population. Self-government should ensure not the nomination of just anyone as a candidate, but the most able and talented organizers, those who can really cope with the job.

The "ordinary people" are not immune either from the influence of social conditions. Those who untill now preferred to earn more and work less and line their pockets on shortages, also oppose perestroika.

The June plenary meeting of the CC CPSU convincingly showed that decisions should be tested with an eye both to present-day experience and to the future. Only deep-going revolutionary reforms can help create a highly effective economic system that will absorb scientific and technical progress like a sponge and stand up to competition with the leading industrial powers in the present-day world.

● There is yet another type of imitator. Among the multitude of those who use their new rights honestly and conscientiously, including the right to elect leaders and managers, there are a number who take advantage of glasnost to blacken high-principled leaders who demand good work, or defame more gifted specialists than themselves seeking to settle scores or take over positions to which their personal qualifications do not entitle them.

I remember a man who during a conversation demanded unlimited freedom to demonstrate. He was a typical ochlocrat (in Aristotle ochlocracy means mob rule). Such people are fanatics who believe in one idea only and are incapable of listening to any other view. They seek to take to the streets to voice often unfounded protests and rout all who disagree with them.

Who in our country insists on the right to unlimited freedom of demonstrations? Local nationalists, extremists from Pamyat and a number of similar groups, people pursuing their own selfish interests, the so-called refusniks who wish to emigrate, etc. Each of these groups is opposed to the others and, given the chance, it would develop into a complete free for all.

We have sufficient experience to understand that local nationalism and great-power chauvinism, anti-Semitism and Zionism feed one another and are all fed by anarchy, disorder and primitive and uncivilized levels of political awareness.

How quickly democracy and ochlocracy have penetrated each other! Only yesterday, for instance, Pamyat was rightly insisting on the conservation of Russian national culture - memorials of the past, architectural monuments, retaining the old names of cities, streets and districts. In other words, they defended our national dignity and called for the wide retention of the values of the past. And that was good. But then people with nationalist and chauvinistic views joined up with them.

● Our society is the best educated in the world, but it hardly needs saying that a great deal remains to be done to inculcate the political awareness and genuinely civilized values to which Lenin attached such great importance. It will take some time before we all master the art of conducting honest and civilized polemics, learn to listen to what an opponent or even enemy has to say, and overcome the atavistic desire to "crush" and "wipe out" any view that does not coincide with our own.

Democratization, the development of positive processes in the cultural sphere, the establishment of socialist and humanist values provide the main and indeed the only way of carrying through perestroika.

But democracy rejects the swings from one extreme to another that have cost our country so dear.

Redrawing the border is not the answer

The events in and around Nagorny Karabakh have brought to the fore a host of problems related to various aspects of Soviet life. Below, New Times analyst Lev Yelin discusses the juridical aspects with BORIS LAZAREV, D.Sc. (Law), administrative law sector chief of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences Institute of State and Law, and IREK MUKSINOV, Cand. Sc. (Law), chief of the Institute team specializing in relations between nations and states.

New Times. The Presidium of the U.S.s.R. Supreme Soviet has passed a ruling and I hope you will allow me to start this interview by quoting from it. It says: "It shall be recognized as unacceptable to resolve complex national territorial issues by exerting pressure on bodies of state authority within an atmosphere of heated emotion and passion and the creation of sundry self-instituted groups advocating the revision of the national-state and national-administrative boundaries that the U.S.S.R. Constitution has established." The autonomous region of Nagorny Karabakh continues to remain in the limelight. Could you make a legal comment on the situation and the published ruling?

Lazarev. The constituent republics, Azerbaijan and Armenia in this particular case, are sovereign Soviet states covered by Article 78 of the Soviet Constitution and analogous articles set out in the republican constitutions. According to this article, the territory of the constituent republic cannot be altered without its consent. To institute any changes whatever in a republic's boundaries, it is essential that its supreme body of state power, to wit its Supreme Soviet or its permanently functioning organ, the Presidium, pass the necessary resolution. Accordingly, the desire another republic may voice to have territory added to it, must necessarily be expressed by its supreme body of state authority. Should the two republics agree, the said decision will next have to be endorsed by the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet as, firstly, under Article 81 of the U.S.S.R. Constitution, the Union must shield and protect the rights of its constituent republics while, secondly, the Constitution lists the autonomous republics and autonomous regions, noting the specific constituent republic to which they belong. Hence, should two republics agree to transfer an autonomous region, for instance, the U.S.S.R. Constitution would necessarily have to be amended.

As far as Nagorny Karabakh is concerned, we know that the Armenian and Azerbaijan republics have not reached any bilateral agreement on this score, which means that any modification of the status of the Nagorny Karabakh autonomous region, or a U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet decision on this matter are out of question.

N.T. Let us presume for a moment that we are dealing with two republics, one of which would like to incorporate part of the other's territory. In this case it would be necessary for the second republic to agree. However, it would be only logical that in most cases no sovereign state, which is what a constituent republic is, would like to share its territory with some other republic. Would you think arbitration necessary in this case? Do we need a body with power to make an independent, objective decision?

Lazarev. Arbitration is inconceivable. The article in the Constitution which states that the territory of a constituent republic cannot be altered without its agreement derives from the Treaty on the Formation of the U.S.S.R. itself. When they agreed to join this Union, the republics retained their sovereign rights, one of which is the right to territorial integrity. So should a republic decline to accept changes, nobody, whether any other republic or the Union generally, can force it to do so.

Muksinov. Let me add that there have been territorial changes between different Soviet republics and that such changes could occur in the future. Moreover, there have been changes in U.S.S.R. state frontiers, let alone republican boundaries. Take the case of ratification by the Presidium of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet in 1954 of the agreement with Iran to adjust frontier and financial issues. At the time the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan and Turkmenia reaffirmed the consent of their republics and their supreme bodies to certain territorial changes in their boundaries bearing upon the U.S.S.R.'s frontiers with Iran.

Lazarev. As you see, even were a republic's boundaries altered in view of changes in the U.S.S.R. frontiers with adjacent states, that republic's consent is absolutely essential!

Muksinov. As for alterations in boundaries between republics, one could list many relevant facts. Take for instance, the 1939 case relating to the digging in Uzbekistan of the Great Ferghana Canal, a section of which was to cut across northern Tajikistan. The Uzbek S.S.R. asked the Tajik S.S.R. to allot the appropriate territory and this request was met. Further, in 1940 the Byelorussian S.S.R. transferred some districts to the Lithuanian S.S.R. In 1953 there was a redistribution of territories between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

N.T. What would you say are the specific features of the situation as concerns Nagorny Karabakh?

Lazarev. Nagorny Karabakh does not have any territorial link with Armenia and has become firmly integrated in Azerbaijan's economic system over the decades.

Muksinov. Nagorny Karabakh is relatively small, only 4,400 square kilometres in area, and of its population of 180,000, 75.5 per cent are Armenians. However, the mountains there are so high as to block Yerevan telecasts, and so a relay station is needed. This, incidentally, is an absolutely legitimate demand. However, by putting this off the decades, local administrators have provoked resentment among the Armenians living in Nagorny Karabakh. Today a relay station is one of the points in the programme adopted to aid Nagorny Karabakh. However, was it really necessary to have the unhappy events take place before that could be done? Eventually, the outstanding nature of socio-economic issues finally became extremely acute. Which means that now we must give thought to what prevented removing these painful aspects earlier, and which mechanism failed to operate.

Lazarev. I think that Nagorny Karabakh's deputies in both the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet and in the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet are partly to blame. After all, according to

the U.S.S.R. Constitution, the Soviet of Nationalities, one of the two chambers of the Supreme Soviet, has five deputies from Nagorny Karabakh, which also has elected deputies in the other chamber, the Soviet of the Union. They should have all sounded the alarm!

Muksinov. It is essential for us to think how real today are the options available to national state formations in tackling the problems before them. I think the present topheavy centralization on both republican and all-Union scale, when it is necessary to go through five or six echelons to cope with just one issue is excessively cumbersome.

Lazarev. Topheavy centralization delays the solution of any issue. But I think neighbouring republics should establish bilateral contacts, as it is not absolutely necessary to look to Moscow to resolve common issues. However meticulously we delineate boundaries, we shall always have citizens of the predominant nationality of one or another republic living in a neighboring republic. Thus, in Turkmenia we find Uzbeks, and in Uzbekistan, Tajiks. We must see to it that the national interests of these categories are taken into account and duly met. This could be done by agreement between the neighbouring republics themselves.

Muksinov. In the U.S.S.R., upwards of 20 per cent of its total population live in republics to which they are not indigenous. We must think about the juridical means we should devise to guarantee their rights as regards employment, office, etc. Turning again to the Soviet of Nationalities, one must stress that it is this same parliamentary chamber that can and must pay greater attention to specific national problems.

Lazarev. A lot depends on the angle from which these matters are resolved. Nearly every issue of economic and social development has its national tinge, and this must always be kept in mind. Relations between nations are implemented through the many different economic, social, political relations that exist in society.

Muksinov. For which reason we must look to other mechanisms, apart from the Soviet of Nationalities, to tackle national problems promptly, and this is where I think the administrative apparatus is called upon to play a more significant role. It is to be regretted that our ministries and departmental offices fail to take into proper account our state's federal structure and multinational character, or the need for the comprehensive economic and social advancement of the different republics and territories.

N.T. We ought no doubt to proceed from the premise that we not only have in our multinational state national problems from earlier times, but also new problems of this nature cropping up and this must necessarily be taken into account and foreseen..

Lazarev. Allow me to suggest that we must constantly be on the alert to support and consolidate that friendship of the peoples which we have ensured, and prevent possible friction, for otherwise several economic and social processes may provoke discord and temporary tension between different nations and nationalities.

N.T. During the initial years of Soviet power, we had a People's Commissariat for Nationalities. So shouldn't we have today some permanently functioning body that would keep its eye on national issues? Supposing a federal ministry drafts plans for the advancement of the economic branch for which it is responsible. At the same time this body would clarify these plans as regards their application to national requirements. After all, in Nagorny Karabakh industrial development has clearly lagged behind and there were not enough good, prestigious jobs for young people. This was not taken into account when the overall plans were drawn up.

Lazarev. In those days, when our task was to set up a national state system, we did need the People's Commissariat you mention, but now there is no need for it. Firstly, what must primarily take effect is the mechanism of Soviets of People's Deputies, wherein different administrative-territorial units are represented. Secondly, we must get the administrative apparatus, each body supervising the different branches of the economy, and the State Planning Committee, to reflect in their plans not only the volume of output of various commodities in this or that republic, but also their local economic and social issues. Plans must serve as the instrument for coping with many national problems. For instance, should it fall to me to plan the advancement of public education in Nagorny Karabakh, I would have to take into account Armenian schools as such and Azerbaijanian schools as such, and plan teacher training separately for either of the two. Further, as regards publishing, I would also have to give thought not only to the overall printing, but to which titles by Armenian authors, and titles by Azerbaijanian authors should be published, and how many copies to run off for each specific book in either of the two languages with an eye to popular demand as it stands. If my planning fails to take all that into account, I could involuntarily "plan" national tension.

Muksinov. Surely it follows from all this that today we should consider having subdivisions within the framework of the administrative bodies that would systematically take care of these matters. Perhaps such a body as the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers' Bureau for Social Development should take the national factor into greater consideration.

N.T. When newspapers reported the Nagorny Karabakh events and, let me note, that by that time we were already faced with the Crimean Tartar problem, foreign newsmen phoned our editorial offices to ask whether we did not think these events had resulted from our perestroika, glasnost and democratization. So let me put the same question to you.

Muksinov. I don't think so. That view is mistaken. The fact that we didn't mention these problems before does not at all mean they weren't there. On the contrary, they were accumulating and have now burst out so forcefully, because they were not tackled duly and promptly.

N.T. The impression is that a certain "rigidity" obtaining in the economic boundaries between our repoublics might at times lead to resentment and ethnic friction. Don't you think it would be a good idea for one republic, say, to participate on advantageous terms in the economic advancement of a territory in another republic?

Lazarev. I think the current modification in planning procedures and the removal of excessive "rigidity" will help. Republican borders are not closed. We have cases when people live in one republic and have a work in another. Many such examples could be cited. If everything is so easily resolved at the "lower" level, we should be able to get the "upper" level, the republican bodies, to act similarly. Take the situation in the Komi Autonomous Republic. There, territory has been allotted for timber establishments to Bulgarians, who have little in the way of timber in their own country. They import this timber and pay the U.S.S.R. for it. As you see, we have been able to come to terms with other states. So can't we really have neighbouring republics act in the same way? Thus far we do not have much in that respect. Apart from everything else, the broadening of the powers local bodies enjoy will enable them to cope efficiently and promptly with regional national issues. They can set up parity commissions to adjust matters and work out proper solutions.

N.T. Do you think there is anything we could borrow from the experience of other multinational states?

Muksinov. Despite the wealth of experience we have accumulated over seventy years, we should also analyze the experience of other countries with federal systems, whether positive or negative. One drawback of the chapter of stagnation was that it inhibited our notions of the opportunities federalism offers, opportunities that are truly immense. ■

Taking the tiger by the tail

From our special correspondent SERGEI GOLYAKOV

In a Beijing store selling foreign books, a modest orange-covered volume caught my eye. The picture on its paper jacket showed the author engaged in conversation, and the title "Fundamental Problems of Modern China." Published in several languages, Russian included, the book was just out. "This is the alpha and omega of our reforms," Chinese comrades told me. I purchased the book on their recommendation. Shortly afterwards this selection of Deng Xiaoping's speeches and talks was published in the Soviet Union. It is very useful reading for those who wish to gain an insight into the processes under way in today's China.

Chief architect

Every building has its architect. At the latest CPC Congress, Deng Xiaoping, a veteran of the revolution and leading statesman of the P.R.C., was named the chief architect of the Chinese reforms. Twice expelled from high Party and state posts in the years of the "cultural revolution," on both occasions Deng Xiaoping regained the leadership of the country and accomplished the objective he had pursued for years. His concept of, and guidelines on, four modernizations and the expansion of foreign links came to underline the current policy line of the CPC, and marked a turning point in the life of the country, with its billion-strong population.

The Chinese leader has made comparatively few public appearances recently, but has frequently addressed Party leaders and met with foreign politicians and public figures visiting China. The text of his speeches and talks of the last few years, which are included in the book, give the reader some idea of the problems which have arisen and been discussed in the Chinese government in connection with the policy of renewal and structural reforms. At the same time, they throw light on certain pages of the author's political biography, which is integrally bound up with the fate of the Chinese revolution.

Deng Xiaoping, the chief architect of Chinese reforms

Deng Xiaoping was born in 1904 in Sichuan Province. Having received his elementary schooling in China, he went to study and work in France in 1921. There he joined the European section of the Communist Youth League of China, of which Zhou Enlai was a leader and started the Youth magazine.

Back home, he joined the CPC. In 1925 he was sent to study in Moscow. In the winter of 1927 he was in Shanghai where for a time he was acting deputy chief of the CPC Central Committee Secretariat.

In subsequent years Deng Xiaoping was an officer of the People's Liberation Army, and took part in the Great March, was a political commissar in Peng Dehuai's troops. In the early 1940s he was one of Mao Zedong's acting secretaries in Yanan. During the civil war of 1946-49, he was a political commissar with the field forces.

In December 1949, after the victory of the revolution, Deng Xiaoping was appointed First Secretary of the South-Western Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and political commissar of the South-Western military district. In August 1952 he became Deputy Premier of the State Administrative Council. In April 1955 he was admitted to the Politburo. At the 8th CPC Congress (September 1956) Deng Xiaoping was made General Secretary of the Central Committee and a member of the Politburo's Permanent Committee.

In March 1956 Deng Xiaoping was present at the 20th CPSU Congress as a member of the Chinese delegation. Later he visited the Soviet Union on two further occasions: as a deputy head of the CPC delegation at the Moscow Meeting of Representatvies of Communist and Workers' Parties, and as head of the CPC delegation at the negotiations between the CPSU and the CPC in Moscow in 1963.

A stocky man of medium height, strong will and emphatic manner (typical of those hailing from Sichuan Province), Deng Xiaoping held top party and government posts until 1967 when, in the course of the "great cultural revolution" he came under fire from devastating criticism levelled by the hongweibings. Recalling the situation which took shape in the country then, he says: "It was an unprecedented calamity. Many of the old cadre, myself included, were targets of persecutions and attacks. Liu Shaoqi (then Deputy Chairman of the CPC Cent-

Conclusion. See our issues Nos. 3,4,8,12

ral Committee, Chairman of the P.R.C. – **S.G.**) was the first 'person invested with power to take the capitalist road,' and I was the second one. Liu Shaoqi was 'commander-in-chief,' and I, 'his deputy.'"

The "deputy" was charged with opposing the "line of President Mao," and rejecting the slogans of the "cultural revolution." The hongweibings demanded in their dazibaos that he should be tried and sentenced to death. The worst did not happen, however.

In 1973 the disgraced politican was again appointed to high party and government posts, and made Chief of the General Staff of the People's Liberation Army of China, Deputy Chairman of the CPC and Deputy Premier.

After Zhou Enlai's death early in 1976, however, he again disappeared from the political scene. On April 7, 1976, the Politburo adopted a resolution relieving him of "all posts within and outside the Party." Again, Deng Xiaoping was neither arrested nor brought to trial for any specific "crimes." The Politburo allowed him to stay on in the Party "to see how he would behave in future." But Deng remained true to himself that time, too.

It makes no difference what colour a cat is

Deng Xiaoping's ups and downs were due to a number of causes, the most important being that as a realist and a pragmatist he had awoke earlier than others to the perniciousness of leftist extremes. At that time the Chinese revolution was confining itself to the class struggle. Deng called for attention to be paid to economic progress and raising welfare standards.

Professor Ross Terrill of Harvard University, one of the shrewdest and the most authoritative students of China, writes that upon being restored to his positions in 1973, Deng Xiaoping expedited the renunciation of the political attitudes typical of the "cultural revolution." He defined his state policy in a brief maxim which scandalized the hongweibings: "It makes no difference what colour a cat is, black or white. A cat is good if he catches mice." As he dotted his i's, Deng went to the length of dropping the following "blasphemous" remark: "In real life, not everything is class struggle." This earned him the reputation of an adherent of the capitalist course of development. "Having completed socialist reforms, on the whole, we continued for years to concentrate on the class struggle and ignored the need to develop productive forces," Deng reminisced later. "That cost us dear."

A similar assessment of the past was made in the main report to the 13th CPC Congress. "We relegated the task of developing productive forces to the background for years," Zhao Ziyang said. "We doggedly adhered to what we regarded as 'socialist principles' but in fact were not socialist at all, inhibited the development of productive forces, and were suitable only in specific historical conditions. Contrariwise, we opposed and regarded as 'a restoration of capitalism' much of what favoured the development of productive forces, commercialization, socialization and modernization of production in conditions of socialism."

Such a policy resulted in an excessively monotonous structure of ownership, a stiff economic management mechanism and an awkward and overcentralized state machinery.

What was to be done to get things moving? The Chinese formula for that sounds amazingly simple: "It is necessary to correct mistakes and to restore what is right." The "correction" and "restoration" were initiated by political changes in the country's leadership. The Third Plenary Meeting of the CPC Central Committee (11th convocation) adopted the decision to shift the emphasis to socialist modernization. The Fifth Plenary Meeting of the CPC Central Committee, held in February 1980, made the situation healthier still. Many followers of Deng Xiaoping assumed the leadership of the Communist Party of China. The Plenary Meeting adopted the resolution on the inadmissibility of the personality cult in the CPC and on restoring the norms of intraparty and state democracy.

Professor Xu Jinxing of Beijing University gives Deng Xiaoping the credit for having criticized the cult of Mao Zedong's personality and the prejudices connected with worshipping him. Mao Zedong's ideas are now regarded, first, as a merger of the general provisions of Marxism-Leninism with the practice of the Chinese revolution and, second, as products of the Party's joint intellectual efforts, as propositions belonging not exclusively to Mao himself, but also to Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, and other leaders. As for the assessment of Mao Zedong's legacy, authoritative Chinese scholars told me, a concrete historical approach must be taken to it. For all his undeniable services in preparing and carrying out the revolution, he made serious mistakes, especially in the final period of his life. His concept of socialist construction was a medley of correct ideas, dogma and petty-bourgeois notions.

The essence of the reforms was a resolute turn from dogmatism to real life and the actual needs of the country.

Political reform

I knew from Chinese sources that Deng Xiaoping had announced his intention to step down back in 1980, but many in the Party would not let him go. So until last autumn he stayed on, holding the posts of a member of the Politburo of the CPC Central Committee and of its Standing Committee, Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the CPC Central Committee, and Chairman of the Central Advisory Committee of the CPC Councellors. It was only at the 13th Party Congress that the 83-year-old veteran decided to resign his top Party posts (except that of the Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the CPC Central Committee), setting an example to other veterans. Nevertheless, I was told in China, Deng Xiaoping is still regarded by the Party and the nation as the leader of the country.

"I can't move any more." A cartoon from the China Reconstructs magazine

Deng's authority is indeed incontestable, although he vigorously objects to the glorification of personality. "There should be no talk of my having played some kind of a special role because it could suggest that when Deng is no more policy will change. This is precisely what the outside world is apprehensive about... We declare for all the world to hear that there is no changing our current lines, objectives and strategy. Why? Because their correctness has been proved by practice. Changing them would be prejudicial to the state and to the nation. Therefore, the nation would never accept a change." Deng Xiaoping uttered these words on his eightieth birthday. Time has borne them out. But life does not mark time. As an old Chinese saying goes, "Each day and each month brings something new."

"Our economic reform is going well, on the whole," Deng Xiaoping told Yoshikatsu Takeiri, chairman of the Komeito Party, in September 1986. "But further progress is bound to come up against all sorts of obstacles... The point is that our political structure is not up to the standards called for by the reform of the economic system. Therefore we must reorganize our political structure if we want the economic reform to be a success and to make further headway."

The question of reforming the political structure was raised in China in 1980. No concrete action was suggested then, however. The improvement of the economic mechanism and the ensuing transformations made the need for changes increasingly urgent. It seemed at first that the first thing to do was to infuse new blood into the executive cadre. "The problem all the socialist countries have in common is, I am afraid, that their cadre of executives is growing old and stiff," Deng told Stefan Korosec, Member of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. A body of counsellors was formed, the procedure of pensioning off senior officials revised, and a number of other measures taken in China. Presently it turned out that personnel renewal was only half the battle, that it was also necessary to change the very mechanism of Party and political control. A product of planning by directive and of past historical conditions, this mechanism impeded the development of productive forces and kept the rate of modernization down. Without the Party, the economy cannot be restructured along socialist lines. But if they are to exercise efficient control over restructuring, the Party and the political mechanism must themselves be restructured. That was seen as the objective of a political reform.

How was the reform to be carried out? This question was high on the agenda of the 13th CPC Congress. As a preamble to the Congress's debates, Deng Xiaoping defined three main objectives of the political reform. The first was to stir Party and administrative bodies and the entire state machinery to greater activity, in other words, to do away with conservative attitudes and develop new thinking appropriate to new tasks. This calls for enlisting fresh forces in running the state. The second objective is to increase work efficiency by dividing functions between Party and government bodies, uprooting bureaucratism, and reducing the inflated administrative personnel. The third objective is to encourage the activity of the people as a whole, make workers, peasants and intellectuals free to act on their own initiative, and grant them more extensive rights to independent endeavour. The democratization of public life is the most important element of the political reform. Democracy, however, should not be patterned upon other, least of all Western, models. The P.R.C. is to create, in the long run, a democracy of a higher order than that in the capitalist world, a socialist democracy distinguished by Chinese specifics. Such was Deng's stand on the matter.

The Soviet expert Ivan Ignatenko at the Anshan Iron-and-Steel Plant in the 1950s

Proceeding from these directives, the Congress outlined concrete ways of implementing the political reform. Although the Congress documents stress that the reorganization of the political structure is to be carried out on a limited scale for the time being, a fairly wide range of reforms is provided for. They include dividing functions between Party and government bodies, granting more rights to the grassroots, reorganizing government machinery, restructuring the cadres, making a practice of conducting public consultations and dialogues, improving socialist democratic institutions and, finally, strengthening socialist law and order.

Late last November, the newspaper Renmin ribao carried the text of Deng Xiaoping's speech at the plenary meeting of the CPC Central Committee convened on the eve of the 13th Congress.

In this speech the CPC leader explained in detail why the political reform was needed and what it must be started with. The political reform is, above all, a reform of the state management system, he stressed, its key element being the division of functions between the Party and the state. The speaker referred to the absence of a clear-cut division of functions between Party and state bodies as a "discouraging feature of the Chinese political system." "All too often, the Party merely duplicates the government, gets bogged down in routine daily matters, and ignores problems of truly vital importance. To quote Zhao Ziyang, 'It only discredits a leader to do his subordinates' work for them.' This is precisely why the problem of leadership has become a cornerstone of the political reform. For the Party the style of its work is a matter of life and death. The division of functions between Party and government bodies is a top-priority task, and unless we effect it we shall not be able to carry out the political reform in full."

The plenary meeting pointed to the topical importance of reforming the political system for a number of other socialist countries as well. However, it is in China that the need for this reform is most

acute. The Party and the state must divide their functions there at all levels, from national to local.

"We had diarchy in this country for years," Zhou Ruijin, deputy editor-in-chief of the Chinese paper Jiefang ribao, told me. "The Party secretary was in control of even the smallest work collective, with the director, for all his formal executive status, remaining in the shade. The absolutization of Party leadership created the impression that the Party was in charge of everything and dealt with all problems instead of exercising political leadership only. This detracted from its authority.

"Under the circumstances, administrators were actually dictated to from the top, while Party executives, who interfered in all details and issued instructions right and left, bore no responsibility for whatever mistakes were made through their fault.

"Now we are going over to the principle of one-man management. The director of a factory bears full responsibility for production, with the Party committee assigned an organizing and guiding role. It is to carry out the Party line, enhance every Communist's personal prestige and to do educational work."

Another important aspect of the political reform to which my interlocutor called my attention is the restructuring of the cadre system. The status of "ganbu" – a cadre – applies to a wide range of persons in China: Party leaders, factory and office directors, experts and civil servants. According to Zhou Ruijin, there are 27 million cadres in China, of whom five million hold executive posts, two million are Party workers, 10 million are experts engaged in the production sphere, and as many again are experts working in the non-productive sphere (education, public health, science, culture, etc.).

The previous practice of personnel appointment and control suffered from numerous shortcomings. It was not backed up by law, provided no stimuli for the promotion of capable young experts, and fostered red tape and irresponsibility. In accordance with new directives, personnel policy will from now on be based on laws and resolutions. All cadres, except Party workers, will be relieved of their immediate subordination to the Party committees. Appointments to executive and expert office will be made competitive and open to democratic control and public supervision. The holders of such posts will be promoted and rewarded (or demoted and punished, as the case may be) depending on their actual performance.

The reform of the political system is as yet only making its first steps. This is an extremely complicated matter in which one canot rush or make reckless moves. "Every measure taken as part of political restructuring," Deng Xiaoping says, "has an effect on millions and tens of millions of people." When are its early results to be expected? Deng is of the opinion that some rewards are due in three to four or five years from now, and longer-term ones – in a decade or so.

So much for the Chinese reforms. I realize, of course, that my account of them has turned out to be somewhat fragmentary and incomplete. Much that certainly merits attention has been omitted for shortage of magazine space. Still,

A few words in conclusion

An elderly stranger addressed me as I was taking a walk in Beijing's Sun Yatsen park one frosty Sunday morning.

"My grandson here has never seen anyone from the Soviet Union. Do you mind if I take your picture with him as a memento?"

I picked up the chubby little boy who eyed me curiously from under a cowl slung low over his forehead. His granddad clicked the camera, and I asked him where he had learned his Russian.

"I worked with Soviet comrades at the Shenyang steel plant way back. We were great friends and spent a lot of time together after hours. Those were good times..."

In the crush of a Tianjin bus, a lanky denim-jacketed lad squeezed his way over to me. He said he was a student at the foreign languages institute, had overheard my conversation with a guide, and wished to ask me something. His first question was whether our students were free to marry (Chinese colleges do not recommend undergraduate marriages). I answered the question. More followed. Then we got off the bus together. I thought we would part, but instead we talked for an hour and exchanged addresses before finally saying goodbye.

A Pushkin monument in Shanghai

Shanghai's Fudan University is one of the largest in China. Says Yan Yuan, assistant-professor in the faculty of international politics: "We invite American professors to lecture at our university, but there have been no Soviet ones so far, which is a shame. Why should our students know more about the U.S. than about the U.S.S.R.? The reforms in China and perestroika in the Soviet Union have much in common. I see this as a fine basis for expanding our contacts, exchanging experience and creative discussions. Our youth should learn more about you, and yours more about us. I hope soon to see colleagues from the Soviet Union within these walls..."

Here is another episode: Deputy Mayor Liu Zhenyuan of Shanghai suddenly switched to a fluent and almost accentless Russian at the end of our conversation. He explained that he had completed a post-graduate course in Moscow in the 1950s to become a Candidate of Science. Li Peng, now the Premier of the P.R.C. State Council, also studied in Moscow at that time, he recalled. It was an unforgettable time of plans, hopes and friendly discussions. Then everything changed. Now there is a chance to make up for the lost time. I'd very much like to see my old Soviet friends again..."

The reader has certainly guessed the Professor's meaning right. The memory of better days in relations between our two nations is alive and ineradicable. The need to restore good-neighbourly relations is truly ubiquitous. The similarity of the problems our countries are tackling gives extrensive scope for cooperation. It is not only a question of economic reforms. The Soviet Union would like to join forces with the People's Republic of China in the great effort to ensure the survival of mankind.

Our meeting with staff at the Shanghai Institute for International Studies made it clear that our two countries hold largely identical views on many international issues and are at one on matters of vital importance. Both our country and China regard the struggle for peace as their No. 1 foreign policy task, want an end to the arms race, and the elimination of the weapons of mass destruction, space weapons included. In addition to the obligation not to be first to use nuclear weapons, undertaken in 1964, the P.R.C. announced in 1986 that it would no

longer test these weapons in the atmosphere.

China enthusiastically welcomed the INF treaty signed by the leaders of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. The P.R.C. condemns the American "star wars" programme, favours the establishment of a new international economic order, and opposes the West's discriminatory policy toward the developing countries. Last autumn Beijing voiced its surprise at the U.S. decision to stay away from the U.N. International Conference on the relationship between disarmament and development, and spoke highly of that forum.

Soviet-Chinese relations have been steadily improving of late. The second half of 1987 witnessed a number of important meetings between representatives of the U.S.S.R. and the P.R.C., and the second round of negotiations on border issues. The Foreign Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the P.R.C., who had taken part in a routine session of the U.N. General Assembly, met in New York. The magazine Liaowang carried an interview with Mikhail Gorbachev, giving the Chinese public its first chance in almost three decades to acquaint itself with the Soviet leadership's views on world development and bilateral problems at first hand. A letter from Sichuan schoolchildren to the Soviet leader and his reply to this message came as good news to all those who wish to see a further improvement in our relations.

A political dialogue is getting underway between our two countries. A Soviet-Chinese summit could be a logical extension of it. An objective need for it would seem to be felt by both sides. Deng Xiaoping said last autumn that although he is now too advanced in years to travel abroad, he would nevertheless be only too willing to meet with Mikhail Gorbachev. The General Secretary promptly responded to this by stating that the Soviet side is all for the summit, which could be held in Moscow, Beijing or any other place convenient to the Chinese side.

The P.R.C. is making the summit conditional on the preliminary settlement of the Kampuchea issue. This matter is already off the ground. A political resolution has been adopted on withdrawing the Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea by the year 1990, if the Kampuchean leadership asks Vietnam to do so. However, it makes little sense to link a Soviet-Chinese summit to this move.

It is precisely to facilitate the solution of complex problems and find mutually acceptable comromises that top-level negotiations are conducted. The recent Soviet-American dialogue is evidence of this. And it will be borne in mind that Moscow has far more bones to pick with Washington than it does with Peking.

In Peking, I often heard that a U.S.S.R.-P.R.C. summit had become a pressing need. For our part, we are all set for it. "We regard China as a great socialist power," Mikhail Gorbachev writes in his book "Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World," "and we are taking practical steps to ensure that Soviet-Chinese relations make good progress along the lines of good-neighbourliness and cooperation. We can already speak of a certain improvement and advance in this respect. We believe that the period of alienation is past, and invite our Chinese comrades to work together for the expansion and further development of good relations between our countries and peoples."

Beijing – Tianjin – Shanghai – Moscow

NICARAGUA

An important step

THE NICARAGUAN TOWN OF SAPOA HAS RECENTLY BEEN IN THE POLITICAL SPOTLIGHT. TRUCE TALKS HAVE TAKEN PLACE THERE BETWEEN A GOVERNMENT DELEGATION LED BY DEFENCE MINISTER HUMBERTO ORTEGA AND THE LEADERS OF THE CONTRAS.

Attempts to hold a dialogue, but at a lower level, had been made earlier – first in the Dominican Republic and then in Guatemala. But they proved futile.

This time too attempts were made to complicate the situation. U.S. troops were concentrated near the Nicaraguan border in Honduras while the U.S. administration and President Reagan personally continued to demand that Congress allocate funds for the Nicaraguan anti-government forces. Nevertheless, the warring sides were able to make an important step towards reconciliation.

Late in the evening of March 23 the secretary-general of the Organization of American States, Joao Baena Soares, who was present at the talks, read out for the journalists the text of a document adopted by the two parties. The Sapoa agreement consists of nine points, the chief of them being the decision to halt all military operations on the entire territory of Nicaragua for 60 days, as from April 1, for as long as the talks on complete cease-fire are in progress. Summit talks on a complete cease-fire will open in Managua on April 6.

,The Nicaraguan government, seeking to promote the establishment of peace, promised to declare a general amnesty, including an amnesty for former members of Somoza's national guard convicted for crimes committed prior to the Sandinist revolution on July 19, 1979. The amnesty, approved by the parliament on March 26, will be caried out in stages. The first 100 political prisoners have already been released.

For their part, the contras have promised to release all Sandinist army soldiers captured by them.

The agreement says that all citizens who emigrated from the country may return home and participate in political, social and economic life. They have been guaranteed the right to vote in the elections held in the country: to the Central American Parliament, to municipal bodies and in the general elections. One of the points envisages that the resistance forces will be able to send their delegates to the current national dialogue in Managua.

The Sapoa agreement has opened up a genuine prospect of national reconciliation in Nicaragua, and this will undoubtedly have a favourable effect on the complex situation in Central America.

This has become possible thanks to the courage and staunchness of the Nicaraguan people, who have for many years been fighting for their independence and the right to decide their own future. It has been made possible by the efforts of the Contadora group, the Contadora support group, and all forces that want to bring peace to the region.

Speaking at a special assembly of the Sandinist National Liberation Front, President Daniel Ortega declared that the Sapoa agreement did not challenge the progressive reforms carried out in the republic. He added that the SNLF would continue to defend the workers' right to form their unions.

It is now important to ensure that nothing prevents the implementation of the agreements reached, and that they are not wrecked by the U.S. administration.

VLADIMIR DOLGOV
our own correspondent
Managua

Word from the torture chamber

has been reaching Geneva - the seat of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. Terror, reprisals, murder, torture and persecution of dissidents - all this is hardly to be rejoiced in. But what can be done about the human rights campaign being further complicated by an ideological confrontation?

Two U.S. Ambassadors - Walters and Valladares - demonstrated in Geneva an example of a striking contrast between clever rhetoric and unwillingness to take practical action for guaranteed personal freedom.

Walters fails

A day before the session closed, Vernon A. Walters, the U.S. Permanent Representative to the U.N., addressed it. Having precisely outlined its terms of reference, he said the Commission was a leading international organization on human rights. It was empowered to defend and assert human rights all over the world. However, it did not have an army or a police force to enforce its authority. The Commission could not impose a fine on offenders or deprive them of freedom. It could actually resort to only one effective means, namely open discussion and debate on the state of affairs in the sphere of human rights in any part of the world. Such discussions frequently help the Commission focus a spotlight on many dungeons and torture chambers the world over and bring hope to their inmates. All those present here, he said, knew of cases when this light had not only exposed monstrous infringements on human rights, but also helped put an end to them.

Then Ambassador Vernon A. Walters, instead of defending human rights the world over, focused his spotlight on Cuba which, as he put it, was ruled by one of the world's oldest dictatorships. This dictatorship still resisted the wave of democracy that had swept a large part of Latin America.

Walters' speech stirred up violent objections. John F. Kennedy once said that the U.S.A. could not live with a malignant tumour such as Castro for another ten years. However, the United States has had to coexist with Cuba for more than a decade. As I see it, Walters expressed a sense of bitter disappointment. This year the U.S. State Department appointed Armando Valladares, a Cuban who had served the Batista dictatorship and had also spent a term in prison after the Revolution, head of the U.S. Delegation to Geneva. What did Washington hope to achieve? Did it hope that Valladares' accusations of violations of human rights in Cuba would sound more convincing? Or that he would be able to win over the Latin American delegations? Or did the State Department appoint Valladares, an ex-convict in Cuba, to a high diplomatic posting out of sheer desire to play a dirty trick on Cuba?

Even members of West European delegations disapproved of Valladares' appointment. They said he was not the best fighter for human rights. Far from it. While Valladares' team tried to blackmail the delegates over to its side in the lobby, the Cuban delegation read out, in the conference hall, Fidel Castro's invitation to a five-man group of observers to visit Cuba. The invitation was unanimously accepted.

Having disclosed the direction of the main effort, the U.S. delegation limited to a minimum its participation in discussions on the state of human rights in other parts of the world. When a resolution condemning gross violations of human rights in Chile was put to a vote, the U.S. delegation abstained. Valladares proposed that El Salvador be dropped from the list of countries, where scandalous violations of human rights have become an everyday practice, although the death squads are still raging there. Despite the fact that in Honduras people are being murdered on political grounds, Valladares maintains that it is a country which strictly observes human rights.

Evil going on holiday?

Now that the session is over I am afraid that both the papers and the public will forget about the Commission until next time it meets. It is as if evil were going on holiday. Meanwhile the agencies which, to my mind, are the most important components of the Commission, will carry on the work. Among these are the working groups and special rapporteurs who are to make a thorough study of the problems they have been assigned.

The Commission depends on rapporteurs, as it only discusses what has been reported to it. It is the duty of the special rapporteur to display initiative in the search for relevant information. Once he has obtained it, he requests the government of the country concerned to submit explanations. After that he sums up his findings and writes comments on them in the form of a report to the Commission.

In 1980 the Commission set up a working group to study reports on abductions on political grounds. Most of the cases had occurred in Latin American dictatorships. In counries with such regimes, trade union activists and students would be abducted in the streets in broad daylight and carried off to unknown destinations. Many of them were murdered without trial or investigation, or interned in concentration camps. Guatemala was notorious for such practices. Though a working group had long been trying to gain access to the country, it was admitted only under the present government. It managed to help only a few of those who had been caught by the murderers. Perhaps the group saved those who had already been blacklisted. Over the past eight years the group approached the governments of 45 countries and examined 15,000 cases. Only in seven or eight cases out of a hundred has it been possible to trace a missing person.

Since February 1985 the Convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment has been open for signing, ratification and endorsement. It has been ratified by fewer than three dozen countries, the U.S.S.R. among them.

Respect for human life and dignity has not yet triumphed. Capital punishment still exists in more than 120 countries. Laws banning torture are worth no more than the paper they are written on. Sometimes torture is considered "useful in getting information from terrorists" to save the lives of innocent people. Or to obtain "truthful" evidence. Conditions in many prisons are inhuman. Inmates are often beaten up. Juvenile delinquents are kept in cells with adult criminals who not only cruelly mistreat them, but also seduce and morally corrupt them.

A special rapporteur on the Commission approached the governments of countries where tortures are practised. What replies did he receive? Lengthy statements lauding national legislation, which guaranteed all human rights. The charges of the working groups were flatly rejected

because "torture and cruel treatment are prohibited."

Cruelty does not exist in isolation. It is a reflection of these and other serious infringements on human rights. What does the special rapporteur propose?

He suggests that the criminal codes be revised to include clauses providing punishment for torture and inhuman treatment of prison inmates. Commissions independent of the administration should be permitted to inspect prisons. The rapporteur says that arrested and apprehended persons are mostly subjected to cruel treatment if they are unable to receive immediate legal aid, i.e., during the first two days, when they are wholly at the mercy of the police. He says that an independent agency receiving and verifying information on every case of torture and mistreatment of people could play a considerable role.

How to tell the truth from a lie

In the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, spokesmen for non-government organizations play the role of back benchers. When I attended the session, the first to take the floor was a man from Amnesty International.

A bespectacled young man with fair hair and a short beard used carefully worded phrases to say that the conditions of political prisoners throughout the world showed no improvement.

"But owing to rigorous censorship of the home press and restrictions imposed on foreign correspondents," he said, "they have been receiving less coverage than before. In 1986, more death sentences were passed than ever before. In the Republic of South Africa more fighters against apartheid and for human rights are being murdered. If political prisoners complain about torture in prisons, they die. They are kept either in solitary confinement or in overcrowded cells, depending on what the governors regard as more painful. All over the world the police have been granted very broad powers to arrest and apprehend people. As a result, many people are pining in prison without trial or investigation."

He made no specific reference to the socialist countries.

Introducing myself to him during a break, I learnt that he was Robert Goodfellow, leader of the Canadian section of Amnesty International. I asked him to tell me about the violation of human rights which their organization was fighting in Canada.

According to our rules, he said, nobody has the right to investigate cases in his or her own country. This makes our organization independent.

Founded in 1961, Amnesty set itself three tasks. First, the release of all political prisoners, prisoners of conscience, i.e., persons gaoled on racial, religious or political grounds, but only if they do not favour violence. Second, the conduct of a fair trial of political prisoners as soon as possible. Third, the banning of torture and abolition of capital punishment in all cases. We make no appraisal of governments, nor do we draw any general conclusions. We do not attack any political system or display any interest in the views of prisoners. We try to help individuals in trouble. We regard it as an important mission in life.

Respect for human dignity is far from common in today's world.
Cartoon by G. Basyrov

Who cooperates with Amnesty International?

Persons who profess the principle of personal responsibility, but not professional fighters for human rights authorized by anyone in particular, cooperate with us on a voluntary basis. They send in reports on violation of human rights either to our headquarters in London or to one of the 44 national offices. Some of them keep regular files collecting information on a single prisoner of conscience or a group of inmates. Every section has a staff of several workers who, like myself, receive a salary. In Canada, there are 25 people who collect information, process it in part, sending the remainder to London. Our headquarters has a research division.

What are the sources of information?

They range from the daily press to letters addressed to us. Obviously our library subscribes to all the press published worldwide. The victims and their relatives try to contact us. Refugees are also a source of information. Of course we often find it difficult to distinguish facts from lies. If we have information about political prisoners or torture in a country, we approach its government requesting admission for our delegation. If the country is not concerned about its international image and refuses our request, we are compelled to collect all the information we can in every possible way.

But they can supply you with false, though seemingly convincing, information, can't they?

I think we seldom make mistakes, although nobody can be guaranteed against them.

Where does your organization get its money from?

Our account is open to anybody. Anyone who is interested can examine it in London. We are extremely scrupulous as far as finances are concerned. We never take money from persons who can compromise us. This, naturally, particularly rules out money from governments.

I have printed the interview in full. I do not know how far I succeeded in urging Robert Goodfellow to be frank with me. Nor do I know whether he was able to resist the understandable temptation to represent his mission in a purely favourable light. And another thing. Amnesty International is obviously showing a desire to enter into some sort of relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. But our country is wary of Amnesty International. For quite a long while it all but dedicated itself to "combating human rights violations in the East." In the meantime, its invectives against the West were purely formal. Does the current shift of emphasis in its assessment of the human rights situation across the world come from a more objective approach or has some other reasons behind it?

A bit of kindness

The key word of all the discussions at the 44th session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights was cooperation. However, no agreement had been reached on its definition. The concept of mutual silence, when one side closes its eyes to the other side's sins and vice versa, was rejected. Common aims are becoming apparent (in the main they have been codified in the Commission's documents). These aims may become a platform for joint action and a basis for understanding. There may be different views on the methods and means for the implementation of human rights and even on the very content of these rights. But since we are all equally eager to implement them, does not this mean that, in a way, we share the same views? Everybody who sincerely seeks to defend human rights is a fully-

fledged partner in the common struggle. Is not that so? It is not necessary to achieve complete identity of views. As Anna Seghers put it, an argument is particularly exciting if it is between people who share the same views. Otherwise it will escalate into a controversy with obvious propaganda purposes, though the participating parties may wish to avoid that.

Sincere partnership implies respect for the other party's experience, and makes it possible to benefit from it.

Concern for human rights should materialize in the establishment of various state, parliamentary, legal and public organizations intended to guarantee their observance.

It is worth noting that, in pursuit of a recommendation of the U.N. General Assembly, such institutes, which are important for the normal functioning of society, are being set up in other countries too. Poland has introduced the post of commissioner on human rights (see New Times No. 4, 1988). The Socialist Alliance of Working People of Yugoslavia has been studying the possibility of setting up a Human Rights Forum based on the ideas of a special resolution on human rights adopted by the 13th Congress of the League of Communists.

The defence of human rights is an appealing concept. It does not call for impressive speeches or sweeping promises. Any contribution to it from the state and individual alike is of value. As the German writer Richard Dehmel said, "even the most powerful feeling becomes small if it is expressed in high-sounding words. A bit of human kindness is better than all the love for mankind in the world."

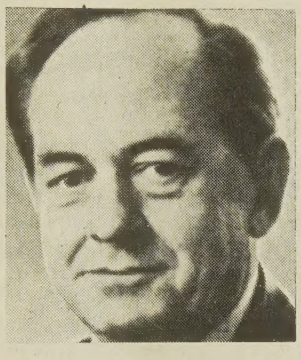
Every achievement in the defence of human rights benefits all, whereas every failure, alas, hurts everybody.

LEONID MLECHIN

Geneva - Moscow

THE PRESS

John Barron strikes a new gold mine



The American magazine Reader's Digest has 100 million readers and 16 bureaux abroad. It carries interesting articles on various subjects, written in straightforward language. When the magazine publishes an article by one of its staff editors, it is more likely than not a sensational exposé of the Russians.

Exposés of the Russians have not been mentioned by chance. The Western press has recently carried articles about Afghan children allegedly kidnapped and driven to the Soviet Union to be trained as Soviet spies. Demands are being heard: "Bring the children back." These articles are no more than a reworking of the two pieces published by Readers' Digest staff editor John Barron in the magazine's August and November issues for 1986.

John Barron reported that Soviet troops were kidnapping small Afghans from their cradles and school-desks and transporting them to Soviet Central Asia to be raised pro-Soviet and brought up as obedient officials of a future Afghanistan, as well as older children to be placed in training camps. In the camps, surrounded by a metal fence, eight- to ten-year old boys study hand-to-hand fighting and learn how to handle sidearms and fire pistols and automatic rifles. They are given disgusting canned food, encouraged to drink vodka instead of tea, and, after brainwashing, sent to Afghanistan, where they infiltrate hostile areas as spies or saboteurs.

John Barron started his career as a naval intelligence officer. He served in Western Europe, where he was responsible for covert operations, and then went to work on the Washington Star. At the time, the newspaper was edited by Jeremiah O'Leary. The magazine Rolling Stone once carried an article showing who O'Leary really was. Several top-ranking CIA officials claimed that O'Leary was on their books as an agent who pushed the "necessary material" for publication in the newspaper and recruited new agents among journalists. Shortly after John Barron was taken on as a staff writer on the Washington Star, articles prepared in Langley but signed by him began to appear in the newspaper.

Later, he made the acquaintance of the man who has looked after him to this day. Kenneth Gilmore headed the Washington bureau of Reader's Digest and was then appointed editor-in-chief of the magazine. The magazine Covert Action called Gilmore "the godfather of the Washington media mafia." He wrote a book on how the KGB "took over Cuba."

It was Kenneth Gilmore who invited John Barron to work on Reader's Digest and, in 1967, gave his blessing to the plan to write a voluminous book about the KGB. Barron was supplied with a wealth of material and allowed to interview Soviet citizens who had defected to the West and worked for the CIA.

In 1970 Reader's Digest began to print chapters from the forthcoming book on the KGB, and in 1974 the book was finally published. Its appearance was most "opportune," as the Senate committee headed by Frank Church was then investigating the work of the CIA. John Barron's book was to convince Senators that, faced with an opponent such as the KGB, the CIA could not behave otherwise.

In 1976, when the CIA was trying to regain its image as an "indispensable and impeccable" agency, somewhat eroded by the hearings in the Senate committee, the need for the book about the KGB arose again, and Reader's Digest issued a second edition. The New York Times said in 1977 that, in helping Barron, the CIA was helping itself.

At the end of 1986 Reader's Digest's editor-in-chief Kenneth Gilmore said in the prestigious Commonwealth Club in San Francisco: "I am proud to tell you that John Barron, one of our most seasoned writers, and author of two books on the KGB, had written about Afghanistan in our August and November issues. One article tells how the Soviets took a nine-year-old boy away from his family and trained him in Russia to be a terrorist."

The publication of articles about children trained as terrorists preceded a White House reception for children who were "victims of the Afghan war." One of the Afghan counterrevolutionary leaders then asked the president to supply ground-to-air Stinger missiles. The President promised to gratify the request and, indeed, the counterrevolutionaries soon received the first missiles of this class. Incidentally, they received them before the deliveries had been approved by Congress. The CIA had no great fears that the operation would be exposed, as public opinion had been suitably brainwashed, and Reader's Digest publications played no small part in the job.

The story about the "kidnapped" children has now been revived in order to justify continued arms deliveries even if the withdrawal of Soviet troops begins.

EVGENY LVOV

Giving for a Good Cause

PAINTING, DRAWINGS, SCULPTURE, APPLIED ARTS, BOOKS, LETTERS, ARCHIVE DOCUMENTS - SUCH A WIDE RANGE OF EXHIBITS COULD HARDLY HAVE BEEN DISPLAYED ANYWHERE ELSE. ONLY HERE, IN THE EXHIBITION HALL OF THE SOVIET CULTURE FOUNDATION, DID THESE DONATIONS, THESE TOKENS OF DISINTERESTED GENEROSITY, FORM A SINGLE WHOLE.

There was a unique day at this unique exhibition - Donor's Day, when donors met the restorers, artists and museum experts who had prepared scholarly descriptions of the gifts and had restored many masterpieces donated to the Foundation. Academician Dmitry Likhachev, President of the Soviet Culture Foundation arrived from Leningrad for the occasion to express his heartfelt thanks to all donors, shake hands with them and present them with flowers and diplomas in appreciation of their gifts.

"Our Foundation," he said, "is, in fact, our country, our museums and libraries, our intelligentsia. The revived need for Philanthropy is a wonderful thing. For he who gives, who donates, is himself enriched. These people are not losing their property for it will bear their names. That's why both Donor's Day and the first exhibition of donations to the Foundation will be held under the slogan: "The names behind disinterested generosity."

On this festive day there were flowers and tears of joy, TV cameras, cheering, and an elegant little concert by the Moscow Virtuosi. There were also some surprises.

For instance, Vladimir Spivakov, conductor and artistic director of the chamber orchestra the Moscow Virtuosi, donated his royalties in convertible currency for a solo performance in Paris to the Soviet Culture Foundation with the express purpose of contributing to the restoration of the Great Ascension Church in Moscow and the opening of the Pushkin Concert Hall here.

A hand-made filigree carved vase with portraits of the wives of Decembrists was presented to the Foundation by Andrei Lokhov, a young artist from a long line of famous Kholmogory carvers.

The public figure Alex Moscovich arrived from France to present his second gift to the Foundation - F. Malyavin's potrait of Ivan Bunin (his first was Malyavin's potrait of Alexander Kuprin.

There are several foreign citizens among the donors to the Foundation. The first of these was Mr Armand Hammer, the eminent American public figure, businessman and collector. He donated paintings by Ivan Aivazovsky, Vasily Vereshchagin, Nikolai Bogdanov-Belsky, and I.Kulikov as well as some drawings by Ilya Repin, and other items.

Professor M.Green of the University of Edinburgh donated personal belongings of Ivan Bunin which she had inherited to a literary museum in Orel.

Mrs B. Rockefeller donated a two-sided icon from the collection of St. Sophia's Cathedral in Novgorod. This masterpriece of old Russian art had long been considered lost.

When Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, paid his first visit to the U.S.A., the American artist Enock-Clowson made a gift of his painting "A Space Map." During the visit the U.S. Armenian community gave R.M.Gorbacheva, a Member of the Presidium of the Soviet Culture Foundation, I.Aivazovsky's painting "St.Petersburg. A View of the Vasilyevsky Island Spit", the gift of Mr and Mrs Shaginyan from New Jersey,and a Russian 17th-century manuscript, the gift of the Sogoyans from Detroit.

Our countrymen who reside abroad but have not forgotten their homeland constitute a special and by no means negligible group among the donors. For example, Russian-born Eduard von Falz-Fein of the Principality of Lichtenstein, donated interesting canvasses, original documents concerning the death of Alexander I and G.Stein's archives pertaining to a search for the Amber Room.

Yevgeny and Alexandra Sobolev, a couple from Finland, presented the Repin memorial museum near Leningrad with a book and a reproduction of a self-portrait signed by the artist and a Fabergé silver cup which was passed on to the Petrodvorets (Peterhof) museum at the donors' wish.

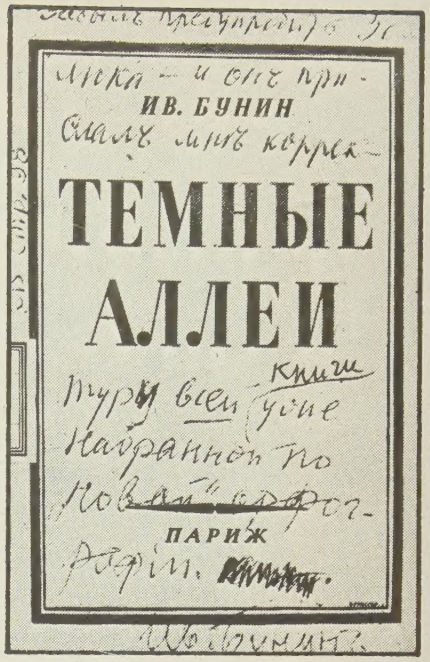
Alexander Polonsky of France, a philologist, lawyer and honorary member of the Collectors' Club of the Soviet Culture Foundation, has collected Russian writers' books and autographs all his life. He has donated A.Remizov's handwritten album "Dark Is the Night" with illustrations by the author, a sketch of Ilya Repin's unfinished painting "A Reading of the Liberty Manifesto", a 1648 copy of Meleteus Smotritsky's "Grammar" and the original of Nikolai Gogol's letter to Varvara Balabina.

Sophia Satina of Great Britain, a niece of the composer Rachmaninoff, has donated "View of a Narrow Street "by M. Dobuzhinsky, the well-known graphic artist...

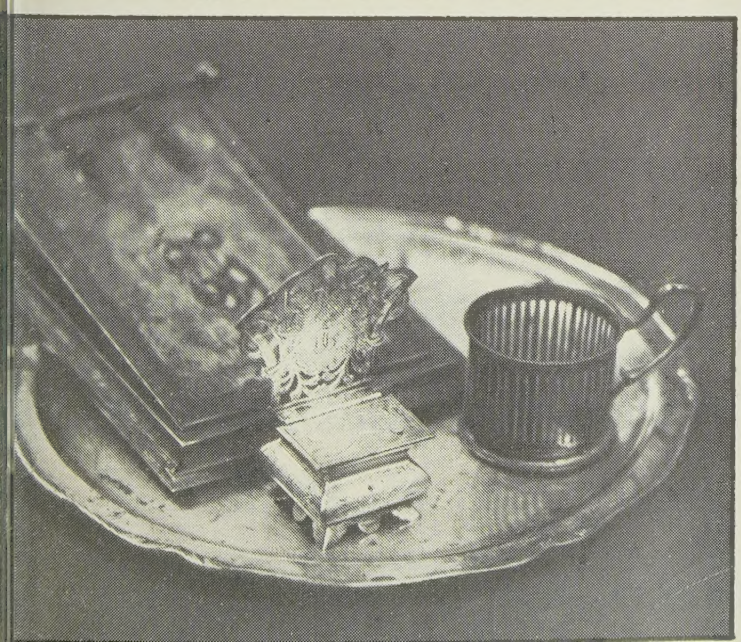
The list of unique donations to the Soviet Culture Foundation could be extended indefinitely. According to experts, the Foundation has received 3 million rubles' worth of exhibits. Most of them are on display in the museums indicated by the donors. For, as far as the Foundation is concerned, the donor's wishes must be carried out to the letter. All donations will now serve to develop and promote Soviet Russian culture. And the name of each donor, whether Soviet or foreign, has been entered in the records of the Soviet Culture Foundation.

MARINA VARVARINA

Photo by Vadim Nekrasov



The gifts on display in the exhibition hall of the U.S.S.R. Culture Foundation include a unique icon painted on both sides from the famous calendar of the St. Sophia Cathedral, Novgorod, which was previously believed to be lost; personal belongings of the Russian writer Ivan Bunin; paintings by Aivazovsky and Vereshchagin, drawings by Repin.



How do you do.

The old castle in Oslo.

A Grieg tune in Bergen.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEST

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THE EARTH — OUR COMMON HOME

Vasily Tereshchenko (U.S.S.R.)

Memories of Norway

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